



Window on Jordan

Fortune tellers: What does the future hold for thee?

By Ibtisam Awadat

Special to The Star

AFTER THE guests had drunk their coffee, Omm Imad took one of the cups and emptied it then she overturned it. Five minutes later, and after the cup dried up, leaving various shapes of coffee granules on its sides, the fortune teller began.

"Your family is in grief, but I can see a bird which means good news," Omm Imad told one of the women. "A blind woman will visit you soon but she will bring sadness and death to one of your relatives."

After she finished talking Omm Imad asked the woman to put her finger tip in the bottom of the cup. Omm Imad repeated the same words.

When we asked the woman who drank that cup about what she heard, she told The Star that the sadness hit is correct, because her husband is ill, but she couldn't tell about the other things now because they didn't happen yet.

While she was sitting, Ibrahim, who's a government employee, asked Omm Imad to read his cup. She repeated the process and began to speak. "You have a pain in your eye and leg, and you are now looking for a bride. A man will tell you about a good bride to be, but you must be patient."

Ibrahim acknowledged the pain he had, but didn't tell anyone about it until now. However, the bride was something else, again, only time will tell.

Fortune tellers or coffee readers have a very good market, most of their customers are housewives. However, the market among the educated, both men and women seem to be growing.

People want to know things about their future or about their personal lives. Women still want to know if they are carrying a girl or a boy in spite of the modern technology found in hospitals. Men want to know if there is money coming in or if there is a bride on the way.

In many cases, fortune tellers made their fortune just by telling what some cynics call dreamed up stories. They are now living it up in some of

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Many are turning to fortune tellers to read their future!



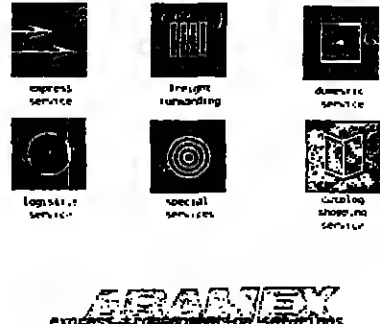
The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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ARAB BANK

International Bank

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Crisis inside the Islamist movement The Brotherhood tries to deal with fall-out of its boycott decision

By Raed Al Abed

Star Staff Writer

THE ISLAMIC movement in Jordan is passing through one of the most critical stages in its existence. The Muslim Brotherhood, which had succeeded in rallying the support of mainstream opposition parties and civic institutions to its decision to boycott this month's elections, is now beleaguered by internal divisions and external pressures.

The first blow came when a number of senior members refused to abide by the boycott decision, which was the most crucial in the movement's history, while others were vociferous in their criticism of the decision. Both trends warned of the consequences of the boycott decision on the movement's relationship with the Jordanian political order.

Last week, the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm the Islamic Action Front (IAF) took another step by deciding to abstain from the Parliament's Upper House under pressure from conservative elements within the rank and file of the Islamist bodies.

In a survey conducted by specialized committees to test the mood among the movement's cadres regarding their participation, about 85 percent of those asked were not in favor of any form of participation.

The Islamists and other mainstream opposition believe that the country is passing through a dangerous crisis through calls on all forces to hold a dialogue and come out with a common agenda to avoid future conflicts.

However, the government has shown no signs of getting involved in such a dialogue with the opposition.

"It was not a matter of religious faith, but of national and organizational interests," said lawyer Abdel Majeed Thuneibat, the Overseer of the Muslim Brotherhood. "The government wants us as a decoration for democracy and pluralism, a role that we will never accept."

At the beginning of the democratic process in 1989, analysts believed that the government would be the participant in the two previous parliaments, but soon after the government decided to minimize Islamist influence in the legislature. This process started with the enforcement of the one-man one-vote electoral system in 1993 which decreased the representation of the Islamists in the 1993 Lower House to 16 from 24 in the previous Lower House.

The government agenda regarding the peace process and the implementation of the World Bank economic reform program, both of which the Islamist oppose, forced the political order to curtail Islamist influence on the political decision mechanism.

The Muslim Brotherhood feels it is not welcomed as an active body in the political arena. "We feel that there is a trend in Jordan that does not want us to take our actual size in the country. Many measures were practiced against us to limit our active influence," Thuneibat said. "The government wanted our presence and wanted us to act as mere witnesses and not to be effective in the formula of the decision making."

He believes that the form of political Islam carried out by the Islamic movement is unwelcomed within the framework of the so-called new world order, and Jordan is a part of that.

Many analysts warn that the government should not ignore the fact that the Islamist absence from Parliament will give them a strong influence

among the people, taking into consideration that the decision to boycott the elections came from the very grassroots of the Islamic movement.

The head of the Muslim Brotherhood also warned of the "continuous harassment against the movement's members." He said that if such repression against the Brotherhood continues, "God forbid, it might lead to confrontation."

He talked about certain government measures against the Islamists such as dismissing some Brotherhood members from state institutions or transferring them to remote areas and some times arresting members without reasons.

"We warn that tightening the rope on the movement and the political violence practiced by some governments led to splits within the Islamic movements and created groups which operated from underground and believed in violence in place of dialogue and democracy," Thuneibat said.

However, Islamists figures who refused the boycott decision of the movement, believe otherwise. Dr Bassam Al Umoush one of the leading members of the so-called moderate trend, supports Islamists participation in Parliament. He was kicked out of the Brotherhood for his controversial views.

Umoush believes the Muslim Brotherhood is facing a conspiracy which aims at destroying the movement. He points to the boycott decision of the movement, which he describes as a violation of the program of the Brotherhood, saying that "for the past 50 years we were working to bring the people out of the tribe mentality and to make people work for the country, Umma and Islam."

"But by the boycott decision

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Last minute preparations for Saturday's opening of the 13th Jordanian Parliament. His Majesty King Hussein will open the session and deliver the traditional Speech from the Throne, which is the government's policy plan on which it will seek to gain a confidence vote from the Lower House. (Photo by Mahmood Shawkat)

Landmark agreement with EU puts Jordan on track, but there is some way to go yet, experts say

By Itham Sadeq

Star Staff Writer

FINALLY JORDAN signed the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement in Brussels last Monday. The signing ceremony was attended by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

The Prince described the agreement as an essential step that comes within the framework of a joint cooperation to achieve progress and prosperity for all nations in the region.

Jordan today has set a milestone to launch a new era of bilateral partnerships that qualifies her for membership of wider forums such as the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The agreement which was initiated in Malta last April, is not only targeted at establishing a free trade zone by the year 2010, but it aims to strengthen joint cooperation between EU members and its partners in the Mediterranean Basin. Such strategy will help to enhance regional coordination in various fields covering the social, cultural, commercial, security, technology transfer, manpower and political aspects.

Three more association



HRH Prince Hassan looks on as Dr Khalaf signs agreement.

agreements has been signed so far, with Morocco, Tunisia and Israel while negotiations are on-going with Lebanon and Egypt and talks expected to start shortly with Syria. An interim agreement between the EU and Palestine National Authority was signed recently.

Speaking about the agreement, Mr Ramon Mesires, Economic Counsellor, EU Delegation, Amman, tells The Star "It is to establish a continuous dialogue between the Community members and Jordan,

for it has been a wish to strengthen our bilateral links that should be based on partnership to further integrate Jordan's economy into the European economy."

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US sees Iraq inspections as 'long-term project' Tension grows over access to presidential sites

WASHINGTON—The United States and Iraq were heading again towards collision over Baghdad's refusal to allow UN inspectors to visit an unspecified number of sites dubbed as presidential by the Iraqis. Clinton administration officials dug in for what they predicted would be a prolonged struggle over access by international inspectors to suspected weapons sites in Iraq.

US Defense Secretary William S. Cohen called efforts by United Nations inspectors to uncover Iraq's chemical and biological weapons program a "long-term project" and said there were no plans to withdraw the extra warships and planes that the United States has rushed to the Gulf region in anticipation of a possible military showdown with Iraq.

"What I want to indicate today is that this is a long-term project," Cohen told a Pentagon news conference. "This is not something that's going to be over in a very short period of time, as Saddam Hussein would like to believe."

The sites, unilaterally placed off-limits or otherwise restricted by the Iraqi government, include dozens of President Saddam Hussein's palaces and their surrounding territory, sometimes amounting to hundreds of acres; facilities assigned to two of Hussein's intelligence operations, the Special Security Organization and the Iraqi Intelligence Service; and bases of the Special Republican Guard, a military elite group that oversees weapons development.

UN weapons inspectors have not tried to revisit the sites since they were readmitted to the country last Friday but are expected to do so soon, as officials suspect the palaces and other facilities may be hiding places for forbidden weapons research and production and for records documenting Iraq's biological, chemical and nuclear warfare plans.

Nizar Hamdoun, Iraq's

ambassador to the United Nations, confirmed Monday that presidential sites remain off bounds to inspectors as far as the Iraqi government is concerned. He repeated Iraq's position—that it has destroyed all its illegal weapons and has nothing to hide. He said Iraqi sensitivity to intrusion stems from concerns about national security and sovereignty.

"We put these places off-limits for the same reason your country has the White House and other buildings in Washington, DC, off-limits to foreigners without an invitation," he said in an interview. "We are hiding nothing, but if we were we could hide these things anywhere. Iraq is a big country. ... The only positive approach to the issue is for the (United Nations) to show us their evidence."

Cohen suggested that several weeks might pass before the United States and its allies can determine Iraq's willingness to permit the kind of unfettered access to sites that UN inspectors have demanded. His remarks and similar comments by other US officials appeared aimed at countering a Russian move at the United Nations to win an early easing of sanctions against Iraq.

Since persuading Iraq to allow US members of the UN inspection team back into the country, Russia has stepped up diplomatic pressure to declare Iraq free of banned weapons, arguing that Baghdad has made enough progress to end intrusive inspections of nuclear and missile programs.

In Baghdad, the government issued a statement Tuesday again demanding a timeframe for completing UN inspections. It also renewed a request that the United Nations stop using American U-2 planes for reconnaissance missions over Iraq and instead rely on spy planes from other Security Council members.

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The Nubia museum is inaugurated, the show must go on

By Samir Raafat

Star Staff Writer

THE INAUGURATION of the Nubia Museum in Aswan took place last Sunday, 23 November, against the backdrop of the Luxor massacre where 58 foreign tourists and four Egyptians lost their lives a week earlier. The irony here is that it took Egypt, the UNESCO and other concerned bodies over 20 years in order to turn the Nubia Museum into a reality.

This was the latest of many cultural attractions expected to draw thousands of tourists each day to witness a rich assortment of Ancient Egyptian treasures excellently displayed in what is definitely Egypt's best ever depository of such artifacts. Many of these were saved

thanks to Egyptian and international efforts when dozens of Nubian villages and historic sites disappeared under Lake Nasser following the building of the High Dam.

But there were hardly any tourists in Aswan on the museum's inaugural day. Six bloodthirsty gunmen had seen to that. Instead, of a Nile filled with picturesque sailboats, there were rows upon rows of idle feloukas, their owners hopeful for the usual assortment of international holidaymakers. None were forthcoming.

The colorful Aswan souk, which would otherwise have been full of bargaining tourists, was empty. The two or three-day cruises lining the Aswan corniche had their shutters rolled down and their

decks have save for the stevedores making listless rounds.

Even Aswan's glorious sunset which on any ordinary day would have lured even the most exhausted tourist from his hotel room, was playing to an empty theater. As I walked down the corniche, I was reminded of sundown in Cairo during Ramadan when most of the city's streets are deserted as millions prepare for iftar.

The only element that broke the ghostly silence was an occasional police siren which meant an important guest or a member of the presidential entourage was making his way to one of Aswan's newly opened and now half empty five-star hotels.

Several VIPs, including UNESCO's Federico Mayor, were in town for the museum's opening. The event was covered live by Egypt's state-owned national and satellite TV channels. What

TV viewers did not see however is the phalanx of security men who also covered the event. With President and Mrs Mubarak in attendance, no one was taking any chances.

"It's a shame how none of those robust-looking, well equipped guards and security men to protect Egypt's largest source of foreign exchange, remarked a foreign guest. He was alluding to the fact that there were only two policemen on duty to protect the thousands of daily visitors to Queen Hatshepsut's temple.

Besides being one of the most visited sites in Luxor, Deir Al Bahari (as the Queen's Temple is often called) will go down in history as the scene of Egypt's worst ever tourist massacre, a consequence of which led to the on-the-air firing of Egypt's minister of interior by a

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ARAB BANK

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Art of olive picking

Great process for producing healthy society and economy

By Elise Y. Sadoun
Special to The Star

IRBID—At the height of the olive season, olive farmers and processors are now working at full capacity. With an increase in Jordanian olive oil consumption by approximately 50 percent between 1983 and 1994, the olive season has increasingly provided a good income for all involved.

Each Jordanian consumes an average of between 2.29-3.69 kilograms of olive oil per year; total consumption of table olives in 1995 reached over 12,000 tons. Olive is known to be high in monounsaturated fats, which lowers LDL (or "bad") cholesterol without lowering HDL (or "good") cholesterol. With this knowledge about the health benefits of olive oil, more and more people are starting to use olive oil exclusively.

Olive trees are planted when they are a year-old saplings, and take approximately 3 to 15 years to bear fruit. One farmer referred to the olive as "the lazy farmer's crop," as little maintenance is required for the trees. They must be fertilized every 2 to 3 years, tilled twice a year, treated with insecticide every 4 years, pruned every year to remove dead and diseased branches, and irrigated 2-4 times a year. Irrigation of 2 cubic meters of water per tree takes place before flowering, after the emergence of the fruit, in August, and during very hot weather. However, over-irrigation may be detrimental to the trees. Some farmers can get away with no tilling at all. Also, never pruning may tire the tree, preventing it from producing fruit for a year or two.

Olive trees are harvested when they start to turn black. The picking is either done by the tree owners themselves, or by hired workers. In some countries, the trees are shaken by machines, but this is rarely if ever done in Jordan because it damages the trees. The trees limbs are shaken, then hand-picked. The olives are picked up off the ground spread around the tree, and picked into hurlap bags for transport to

the olive processing plant.

Each farmer's olives are processed separately, so he receives the oil from his own olives. The processing is made either by a traditional press system, in which the olives are stone ground and then pressed between stone or metal slabs, allowing the oil to seep out, or using the modern method: olives are first washed and rinsed, crushed, mixed with water for a fixed amount of time to allow the oil to be released from the mixture, and then fed through a decanter which separates the mixture into oil, water, and pomace. Then the oil is pumped into a centrifuge/decanter, where it separates again into purified oil and waste water. The oil is then poured into metal containers or plastic jugs. The oil further separates during storage leaving purified oil with a bottom layer of inedible vegetable-matter sludge which is discarded as the container is emptied.

Modern processing machines have the capacity to process 1-5 tons of olives per hour, and they run 24-hours per day during the busiest time of the season. The olives contain between 12 percent to 35 percent of oil by volume, and the yield is more or less the same using either the traditional presses or the modern machines. The modern method has the advantage of lower labor costs, and faster processing and thus reduce olive damage and poorer quality oil due to long storage time.

Olive processing yields by-products of vegetable water and pomace. The vegetable water is stored in tanks, then pumped to a reservoir where it evaporates. The olive pomace, which is high in organic matter and soil-enriching nutrients, is either sold by the ton for use as fertilizer or processed into high-energy charcoal.

The economic benefits of olive production in Jordan are widespread. The olive tree will produce olives year after year for hundreds, possibly thousands of years. Therefore the initial investment by the farmer in saplings and land will bring a high return for him and his progeny. The olive pickers also make a good amount of money. Each man makes JD 3.50 per day,

while each woman

makes JD 3 per day. Some pickers forgo the daily wage for up to 25 percent of the olives they pick. The olive processing plants take 9 percent of the farmers' total oil as payment for processing, then sell the surplus. The plant also sells the olive pomace. "It is a great business. It is all cash with little or no debt," says Jamal Sadoun of Ahmed Said Sadoun's Olive Processing Plant in Samar. Young men also take advantage of the olive season by riding around in donkey-drawn carts, selling drinks and snacks to the field workers and farmers waiting their turn for their olives to be processed.

This year's olive yield is less than average, only about 50 percent of a normal crop. However, the price of the oil remains about the same as last year, about JD 50-60 for each 16 kilogram container of oil. Different variables affect the price of oil. Some regions produce a higher quality oil, therefore the price is higher. Oil quality depends on free variety, soil and climate conditions, conditions of the olives when picked, and the amount of time the olives are stored before processing.

The olive season has a great impact on the family life of all those involved. Families get together over a weekend to pick the olives off their own trees. Processing plants are usually a family operation, which all family members pitching in to help. Sons and cousins work side by side or in rotating shifts, sometimes covering more than one location. Families also hire



themselves out to pick olives. The adult men and women work side by side in the field. Even the kids help out after school and on weekends by climbing up the tree to shake the branches and pick olives off the highest limbs.

The head of one olive picking family, Mr. Abu Ja'fir Kinani of Samar, says that the whole family enjoys the olive season. They go to the field at 6:30 am eat their breakfast, and then start work at 7: they take a half-hour break for a quick lunch and coffee or tea, then continue working until 3:30 pm. He says, "the olive season has a very positive effect on our family. We all work together and everyone benefits from the harvest. We are happy, telling

stories and jokes while we work, so the time flies. We are given some of the olives and oil for our family, in addition to the daily wage. We also get to meet new people and see old friends."

Mr. Kinani said that his family of 12 uses 8 containers of oil, and 35 kilograms of olives in one year. They use only olive oil, and they have been picking olives for the past nine years, since he retired from the army.

More and more people are planting olive trees. The trees benefit the environment by preventing soil erosion, and by requiring fewer chemical treatments than other fruit trees. Olive farming also benefits the local and national economy. ■

The Nubia museum

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visibly unnerved President

Mubarak.

Egypt's new minister of interior Habib Al Adli is not taking any chances. The desert road from Aswan International Airport is littered with security men. There are the khaki uniforms, the paramilitary guards, the black dressed policemen and the agents in plain clothes. And by the looks of their attire, Bedouins and villagers have also been drafted in this security exercise. Most stood facing the desert as though an armed attack was expected from the wilderness. The overall effect would've been farcical had the Luxor carnage not been fresh on everyone's mind. "The stable door had been locked after the horses bolted!" exclaimed one of the observing journalists on our bus.

The evening of the museum's inauguration, top VIPs and guests attended a spectacular all-Nubian folklore show in the museum's open air amphitheater. The setting was second to none. Save for a small rustic wall, it was difficult to heed where the rocky, palm-topped museum grounds ended and where Aswan's magical outback began. It all blended so beautifully. The Aswan Troupe was directed and choreographed by Walid Aouni, the current head of Cairo Opera's Dance Theater. Popular Nubian singer Mohammed Mounir sang two Nubian songs followed by the internationally acclaimed Hamza Ala El Din. El Din, who is now a resident of Berkeley, California, gave a moving Old performance dedicating his composition to the memory of Luxor's fallen victims and their grieving families. "As we gather together in this neighborhood party, we, the people of Aswan and Luxor, as well as the rest of Egypt cannot overlook or accept the outrage that took place a few days ago." Words that must have comforted those who felt the opening celebration of Aswan's long-awaited museum could have been delayed under the circumstances. "But," remarked the veteran director of a foreign cultural center in Cairo, "we must never give in to terrorism, and so the show must go on." ■

Landmark agreement with EU puts Jordan on track, but there is some way to go yet, experts say

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agreement becomes effective, Jordanian industrial and agricultural products will be able to enter the EU markets with many facilities and free from customs' duties. In turn, "Jordan will gradually remove customs duties on some industrial imports from EU members," says Dr. Naheel Ammar, secretary general at the Ministry of Planning.

However there won't be any immediate exemptions on imports that have local alternatives. These products are given a five-year grace period start-

ing from the effectiveness of the agreement, Ammar adds. This will give Jordanian products enough time to enhance their quality and meet the international standards and specifications and provide protection for national industry, mainly in the pharmaceutical field.

This is an important issue which was at the core of the early dialogue between the government and representatives from the private sector at the Amman Chamber of Industry (ACI) on the agreement's implications, opportunities and challenges.

"Our factories have to be aware of new challenges and should be fully ready to face them by abiding to international measures and high quality requirements," says Mr. Ali Al Dajani, an expert at the ACI.

The European countries have the raw material, the high technology and the equipment whereas we don't, he argues. So it will be a great opportunity to our local industry to benefit from their technology and offer training as it is stipulated in the association agreement.

As for the trade ties between Jordan and the EU, there was always a big gap causing a deficit in the balance of payments. European exports to the kingdom are annually esti-

mated at \$800 million, while Jordanian exports to these countries do not exceed \$100 million. "The partnership agreement could help fill the gap in our commercial exchange with the EU," says Al Dajani.

A two-day seminar was held lately by the Jordan Businessmen Association and in cooperation with the EC Delegation in Amman at the Regency Hotel just one day after the signing of the partnership agreement to allow the Jordanian private sector to enhance their knowledge about the agreement and its implementations, opportunities and challenges.

Dr. Tayseer Abdul Jabbar, an economic expert says

"undoubtedly our local industry will face a tough competition from its European counterparts as the latter will be allowed customs-free access to our market and without restrictions." He stresses that the domestic industry should go through restructuring programs in order to be strong enough to compete in a free market economy. Yet Dr. Abdul Jabbar adds that some factories may be destined to close down if they do not improve and develop as quick as they can.

However, this agreement will have its impact on the government's customs revenues. Any expected reduction in customs duties and other fees imposed on imports will lead to a decrease in the customs revenues, which form about 16 percent of the domestic revenues in the kingdom's general budget. Dr. Abdul Jabbar says. ■

Tension grows over access to presidential sites

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ity Council permanent members. UN inspectors re-entered Iraq on Friday, but have yet to force the issue of access to the dozens of sites Baghdad considers sensitive, including numerous presidential palaces and areas controlled by intelligence services or President Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard.

Richard Butler, the Australian diplomat who leads the UN inspection effort, is due in Iraq next week for talks. But US officials declined to speculate on how soon a new confrontation might arise.

Mohamed Said Al Sabah, Iraq's Foreign Minister, warned that if the UN inspectors try to force their way into any of the presidential sites, they will be thrown out of Iraq.

"We're being very cautious about how we work it," said a State Department official, refer-

ring to the issue of sensitive sites. "Part of the problem is that the consensus (among UN Security Council members) has broken down."

If Iraq again blocks access to some sites, Cohen said the United States would press the Security Council for punitive measures. "It might be a tightening-up even of further sanctions," he said. "It might be sending the message to Saddam Hussein. There'll be no relief at any time in the future."

He called military action a "last option," but warned: "If it is necessary to resort to force, I think you can be reasonably assured it will not be a pinprick." Cohen spoke as he released an annual Pentagon report on the worldwide threat of nuclear, biological and chemical arms. Defense officials said the report's publication date had been set weeks ago. But they did not hesitate to take advantage of

the coincidence of its release and the Iraqi conflict, which the administration has said is basically about keeping weapons of mass destruction out of Saddam's hands.

"It's a problem he has managed to highlight, but it's much bigger than Saddam Hussein," Cohen said. The report warns that "more than 25 countries" either have or are trying to develop such weapons.

The report cites the Middle East and Africa as having "the highest concentration of emerging" nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and missile programs of any region in the world, singling out Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria as trouble spots, but failing to mention Israel, which Cohen said does not threaten US national interests. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

The Brotherhood tries to deal with fall-out of its boycott decision

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we brought back the tribe mentality - and we made it again a reference to the people."

In one of his strongest attacks on the Brotherhood leadership, Umouh told The Star that "There are people in the leadership whose aim is to destroy the movement... some in the leadership have a conspiratorial mentality."

Thunibat refused to respond to Umouh's accusations, but he said that "Umouh is still a brother to us, since the internal court decision to dismiss him is not final and needs the ratification of the higher body of the movement." However, Thunibat said Umouh was hasty in his judgment and he is held responsible for that.

Thunibat rejected speculations that there is a conflict between two trends in the movement - the moderates and the hardliners. He said the movement had surveyed its members regarding the boycott decision. "We fully adhered to the Shura norms and the results proved that the majority of the movement supported the boycott of the elections." He added that "those who violated the majority, in reality, ousted themselves but have not been ousted by the movement."

Press reports talk about a new Islamic party being formed by some breakaway

figures. Dr. Abdallah Al Akaleh who violated the movement's decision by running and winning a seat in the Lower House, is said to be leading efforts to establish the new party. "It is still early for such an idea," Akaleh told The Star. He believed that differences between him and the movement are over policies. He called for an independent political decision of the IAF in order to end differences with the movement.

Commenting on the idea of a new Islamic party, Thunibat said Islam is not restricted to one group. "We do not oppose such an idea." But the Overseer added that it is not in the interest of Islam and the country to scatter Islamic groups among different trends which later might create differences among them since the idea is not complementary work but competition.

On the other side of the equation is Ziad Abu Ghaneim, an Islamist figure who was the spokesman of the movement before he was dismissed from the Brotherhood for his accusations against the leadership of the movement. Abu Ghaneim, who still considers himself as a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, said there is no crisis between the Brotherhood and the political order. If there is a crisis, it is in the mind of those who do not want good relations between the movement and the regime.

He added that the Muslim Brotherhood is the one which had decided to boycott the election, while the government was calling for their unconditional participation.

He added that "I am sure that the Brotherhood will not be the party responsible for spoiling relations with the political order." He said the Americans and Jews do not want to see an active Islamic movement in Jordan. He said the political order in the country is clever enough to protect Jordan from a cycle of violence by rejecting regression on the Islamic movement. ■

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional
report on Jordanian
news and views edited
by Marwan Al Asmar



His Majesty King Hussein opens the Wadi Al Haddadeh tunnel, in downtown Amman, Tuesday. He is accompanied by HM Queen Noor, Prime Minister Abdel Salam Majali, Amman Mayor, Mondruh Al Abbadi, and other top officials.

New Upper House

The composition of the new Upper House of Parliament is quite interesting. The current Prime Minister Abdel Salam Al Majali is made into Senator. He is also joined by three other Prime Ministers like Zeid Al Relai (who heads the house), Mudar Badran, and Abdel Karim Al Nabarti, a surprise member, who will be remembered for the head increases. Six new members are also ministers in the government. They are Abdallah Nsour, Rina Khalaf, Tawfiq Kreishan, Nahir Rashid, Jawad Al Anani and Saad Al Din Juma. Five senators held the Ministry of Interior's portfolio. These include Mudar Badran, Mohammad Rasoul Al Kilani, Rajal Al Dajani, Jawdat Al Shoul, and Nahir Rashid. These also headed the Public Intelligence Dept. at one time or another.

Quite a few members who were appointed also worked as former ministers. These include Thouqan Al Hindawi, Akel Al Fayez, Sami Joudeh, Marwan Al Hmoud, Taher Kanan, Adeeb Halasch, Taher Hikmat, Kamel Al Ajlouni, Mohammad Alash Al Adwan, Fawaz Abu Al Qhanam, and Nader Abu Al Sha'r, and Kamal Al Shaer. Eight senators of the new Upper House have doctorates.

There are three women members in the Senate. Leila Sharif is joined by Rima Khalaf and Subha Al Mutani who takes over from Naela Al Rashdan. Other people who are not re-appointed are Ahmed Al Tarawneh, Abdallah Salah, Ameer Khumash, Junul Nassar, Maen Abu Nowar, Kamel Abu Jaber, Kamel Al Sharif, Saad Al Tal, Nassar Al Din Al Asad, Yusef Hikmat, Qasem Obiedat, Ahmed Al Aqalich, Mohammad Odeh, Al Qar'an, Dawood Hanniyah, Abdel Majed Shoman, Gheth Shbeilat, Sami Mithqal Al Fayez and Mashhour Abu Tayeh.

A business resignation

Heavyweight businessman Mohammad Asfour has resigned his seat from the Executive Council of the Amman Chamber of Commerce (ACC).

He said that he wasn't satisfied with the work of the council having realized of late that the 1994 elections to the chamber were forged. After an argument in a council meeting, he decided to submit his resignation "in the interest of the private sector and public corporations." In a press conference, Mr Asfour said his resignation is final, and he would not fight the coming elections to the ACC if the situation in the chamber remains and the by-laws of the chamber are not changed to give more equal representation to all commercial sectors and companies. A short statement later released by the ACC completely rejects Mr Asfour's allegations.



Asfour

JEA: the "greens" and "whites"

The heat is on. The seven sections of the Jordanian Engineering Association (JEA) are fighting the coming elections of the association, which is to take place on 3rd and 5th November, under a united list. For the first time in the history of the JEA, the "green list" led by the nationalists and leftists and the "white list" led by the Islamists have decided to come together and field 49 candidates for the elections. But all is not going too well. Already, there are murmurings of dissent among members of the "green list," who now say, that they still want to fight under their "green" label. In addition to that, there is an "independent blue" gearing up for the next fight. The independents might have a chance profiting from the differences between figures from the "green list".

Libyan ambassador in hospital

The Libyan ambassador to Jordan is in hospital having been attacked in his office at the Libyan Embassy in Amman. The assailant, a Libyan citizen, hit the ambassador with a stapler on the head. Embassy guards were then alerted and rushed the ambassador to one of the hospitals in Amman. Investigations are still continuing.

Back to normal

Everything appears to be back to normal in one of the schools in South Shuna in the Jordan Valley. Earlier on, Minister of Education Munthir Al Masri had closed the South Shuna Vocational Secondary School in the light of attacks made on it by a number of people from the area. The school was reopened last Tuesday, and the attackers promised that they would repair the damage on their expense.



A peaceful demonstration was held outside the Prime Ministry, Saturday. The families of Jordanian prisoners who are held in Israeli jails were demanding their release. A number of newly elected deputies as well as members of popular organizations joined in the demonstration. Lower House deputies Mohammad Al Azaydeh, and Nashed Hamarneh, presented a memorandum to the Deputy Prime Minister for sented a memorandum to the Deputy Prime Minister for Social Affairs Dr Abdallah Nsour, to push for the release of prisoners. In turn, Dr Nsour said that the case of the prisoners is being followed by both His Majesty King Hussein and the government. There are 17 Jordanian prisoners who are still held in Israeli jails.

Photo-journalism comes under the spotlight in Amman

By Ibtisam Awadat
Special to The Star

PHOTO-JOURNALISTS from Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Bahrain, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan gathered last week in a three-day workshop to discuss the theme of "photography in journalism". The workshop was organized by Jemstine program of the European Community Med Media and the regional Audio-visual Commission of the French Foreign Ministry and Agence France Press (AFP).

"We realized that there is no interaction among Arab photo journalists, so by this workshop we want to give our photographers the chance to express themselves," said Mr Patrick Baz regional photo-manager in the Middle East for the AFP.

Mr Baz, who was a journalist until the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon then became a photographer explained, "In war, it's impossible to get a story but you can take good photographs that are much more expressive than the best of stories."

Mr Baz won the Picture of the Year Award in 1993 which was organized in Gaza. In the photo, a little school girl wearing a red dress with her satchel on her back running and covering her ears with her hands at the same time. In the background an Israeli soldier can be seen.

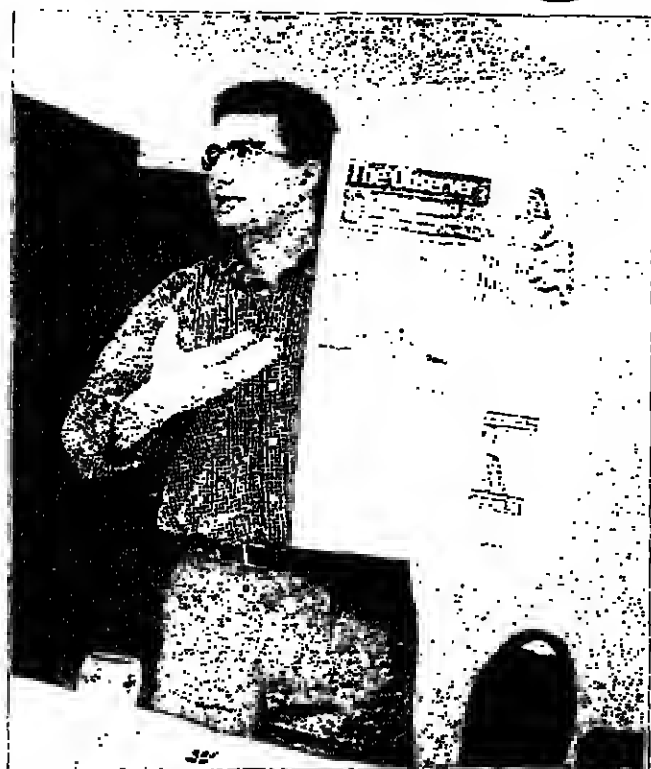
"These are a group of professionals who didn't have the good opportunity they deserve, although they made big contribution in their newspaper," said Mr Tudor Lomas, the project director in Jemstone.

"By holding such meetings, we give photographers more understanding and confidence and show their newspapers how much respect we have for such professionals."

"In this meeting we discuss photo-journalism from the professional and technical sides," said Mr Khaled Shorman, regional coordinator in Med Media.

The first-day in the workshop was practical training in photography. Participants went into groups, and concentrated their lens on two major themes," he said. "The first was the 50th anniversary of the division of Palestine so there was a visit to the Palestinian camps, while the second theme focused on Iraqis in Amman," Mr Shorman added.

The second day of the venue was devoted to the



Baz (Lebanon) shows the impressive effect of photographs on the front page

evaluation of the first day of training and discussed the possible errors which the photo-journalists may have. In this respect, journalists were told about the best techniques for a good picture. Also part of the day was spent on discussing the importance of photographs in the journalism profession.

The last day focused on the moral dilemmas which photo-journalists face in carrying out their duties. Because of the nature of their work, it often touches on the personal lives of others. The photo-journalists discussed the best ways of dealing with that.

"This is the first workshop which I take part in. I see it as a good chance to meet other Arab professional photographers," said Mr Khalid Abdel Latif, chief of photography in Al Ayyam daily newspaper in Bahrain.

"The most difficult experience I had was during my participation in the coverage of the Gulf War. I took photos of people who were killed but my paper would not publish for humanitarian reasons."

Mr Nedal Murad a Syrian photo journalist in the Syrian News Agency had been in this field for 20 years. He stressed the importance of exchanging ideas and experiences among Arab photographers.

Meanwhile Mr Tareq Huss-

ein an Egyptian photo-journalist, who works in the Middle East News Agency, talked about the problems they ran into inside the journalistic establishment and outside.

"It is very difficult for Arab photographers to keep up with the new developments in our work since the telecommunication revolution is moving rapidly, so we must be aware of the latest techniques and this is one of the goals of this workshop."

On the external difficulties photo-journalists face, Mr Hussien added, "There is a double chase when we are covering an event. In Egypt for example, first we have the nervous policemen, then we have the angry public who delay our work. So the pressures on us are enormous."

The enthusiasm was clear from all participants because it's rare to hold such meetings. The speaker was an Arab expert, and the information was available in their native language.

"Because I'm a Palestinian photo journalist I have direct contact with Israeli soldiers who treat us as enemies and who have no rights," said Mr Jamal Al Aruri from Al Ayyam Newspaper in Palestine and also works for the AFP.

"I took a rare picture of a Palestinian woman giving birth in the street while she was waiting near an Israeli inspection point," said Mr Aruri who was injured three times and arrested four times. The last injury he sustained was by an Israeli soldier who couldn't have been more than two meters away from him. The soldier started shooting despite the fact that Aruri told him that he is a photo-journalist.

"I refuse to give them my film, but if they insist, I challenge them and damage it myself."

"Learning by doing is the slogan on such meetings so he participants will produce and judge their own products by themselves," Mr Shorman concluded.



A woman in tears is comforted by her daughter. (Photo by Aruri for Ramallah's Al Ayyam daily in the West Bank).



Mahmoud Shawkat (The Star), takes a shot of children in the Al Hussein Camp



Abdel Latif (Bahrain's Al Ayyam newspaper) takes a snap of "two thinkers" in downtown Amman.

Fortune tellers: What does the future hold for thee?

Continued from page 1

the most beautiful areas of the city. Some of these pretenders charge JD 5 for each cup of coffee.

The black drink has become a profitable way of earning a good living?

"I don't believe in reading the future," said Nadia, a secretary in a government department. "But many of my friends and relatives do, some of them are obsessed in knowing what will happen in the coming days," Nadia adds.

"Because the future is mysterious, people find it very exciting to know something about it," said Dr Sabri Rbiehat, a sociologist in Philadelphia University.

"Some individuals like to

see others devoting their time to tell them about their future. In a way it's a personal satisfaction."

About the real news which fortune tellers predict, Dr Rbiehat explains, "Right from the start fortune tellers test the people who come to listen to them, this is what we call as the first step to enter into the character. Once the first step is passed, then the fortune tellers know that they go people hooked and can tell then anything and they would listen."

"Islam is a religion which highly values the sciences and refuses to underestimate our minds," said Mr Mahmoud Taleh from the Ministry of Awkaf and Islamic Affairs.

"Fortune tellers are very clever, they depend on the

psychanalysis and emotions of others."

One of the strangest demand of fortune tellers, is valuable advice. If you want to have a clear reading of your future you must only drink one cup of coffee or the reading will be mixed."

"To drink a cup of coffee or many will be the same. It can never tell you about your future, only God knows that."

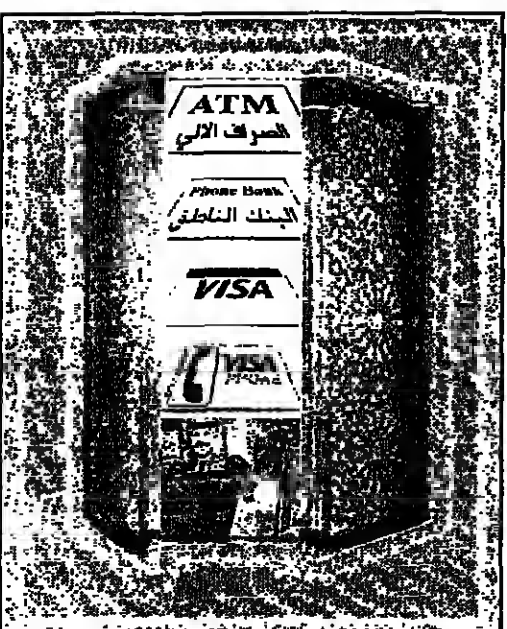
But fortune telling continues to thrive, just about everybody wants to know what the future holds in store for them regardless of whether they really believe in coffee cups or in palm readings.

The law can't convict what is termed as these pretenders because people go to them of their own free will, pay them and don't complain.



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Our Say...

US armada in the Gulf: The real objective

THE UNITED States continues to amass troops and military hardware in the Gulf states in spite of the diplomatic conclusion to the Iraq-UN standoff through Russian efforts. Two US carriers accompanied by a flotilla of warships are anchored within striking range of Iraqi targets, in addition to tens of fighter planes that are ready to move from airfields in Kuwait, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia. Long-range B-52 bombers await orders to fly from their Indian Ocean base to launch their deadly Cruise missiles deep into Iraqi territory.

With about 28,000 US soldiers now in the Gulf, this is the largest concentration of foreign troops and military might in that area since the Gulf War. US officials brag that new weapons have been sent to the area that are more lethal and accurate than the ones used in 1990-91 war against Iraq.

It is ironic that these weapons of mass destruction are being assembled by the same power that wants to keep the same region free of these terrible weapons. The United States is fueling the arms race in the Gulf today by playing the security card over and over again. The question is this: What does the United States hope to do with its armada and strategic arsenal now on high alert in the Gulf region?

The US objective is not to force Iraq into honoring UN resolutions, but to maintain its control and hegemony in the oil-rich Gulf region. Russian efforts, backed up by France, China and most Arab states, were not aimed at providing Iraq with an escape route—a chance to side-step the Security Council and its resolutions. On the contrary, Iraq wanted a guarantee that sanctions will be lifted as it fulfills its commitments under resolution 687, which calls on Baghdad to rid itself of weapons of mass destruction.

Washington could not stomach the success of Russian diplomatic efforts. It could not accept the idea of seeing its absolute control over the Gulf region weakening or being shared with others. Its armada in the Gulf is capable of destroying Iraq ten times. But Washington's message is not aimed at Iraq alone. Its target are the security-conscious Gulf states in addition to the Russians and others who do not see eye-to-eye with the US over its Gulf and Middle East policies.

The idea that might is right is very much in force here. But what adds insult to injury is the fact that the US is trying to conceal its self-serving agenda by moralizing about its concern for literal implementation of Security Council resolutions with the aim of maintaining stability and security in the Gulf area.

Last week, President Clinton told Russia's President Yeltsin that Moscow should not let its emotions towards Iraq cloud its political judgment. This is laughable coming from the very state that lets its bias in favor of Israel over-rule all attempts to force the Jewish state into submitting to countless UN resolutions and international agreements. ■



UN inspectors, carrying their equipments, as they leave their headquarters in Baghdad to start the process of inspection, Tuesday.

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Notes from the Levant

Militant Islam: Forming the right response

By Osama El-Sherif

EGYPT IS still reeling from the shock of the Luxor massacre which claimed the lives of 58 foreign tourists two weeks ago. The number of victims and the gory details that had emerged from the bloody incident have once again focused the world's attention on the issue of Muslims and terrorism. Before the Luxor blood bath, Algeria had occupied front-page headlines for many months as hundreds of innocent civilians were also butchered allegedly at the hands of Muslim extremists.

These and other disturbing events have nurtured the emerging phenomenon of Islamophobia, especially in the West. Muslim extremists are seen as common terrorist responsible for the indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians in the United States, Israel, Algeria and Egypt among others.

Islam, as a religion, has become a victim of western stereotyping and misconception. The emphasis has shifted from underlining the causes leading to terrorism in the name of Islam to a religion that is militant by definition. This is a great injustice to Islam and to Muslims all over the world.

Islamophobia is not something that Arabs in particular and Muslims in general can afford to ignore. The negative perception of Muslims and their religion is affecting public opinion in the United States and Europe and ultimately it will have an impact on government policies and actions. These policies will affect all Muslims regardless of their political leanings and values.

Very few Arab intellectuals and leaders are capable of addressing western public opinion and making a case for Islam. Among them is Crown Prince Hassan of Jordan, who relentlessly warns of the dangerous outcome of a rise in Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments in the West, where Muslims are becoming a sizable minority in Britain, France and Germany. The same could be said of the United States and Canada where Islam has become the fastest growing religion in North America.

But intellectual discourse between Muslim and Christian thinkers, such as the series of religious dialogues that regularly take place, is not enough. One bloody incident like the Luxor massacre can offset the effect of years of debates and exchange of ideas between thinkers.

The grave misunderstanding of Islam and Muslims cannot be adjusted until we too can come to an understanding of the root causes behind Muslim extremism.

Attempts to find answers have been scarce and timid. For years, Algeria has been swept by a wave of terror that was blamed on Muslim fundamentalists. And for years, the cycle of violence has been widening until it reached outrageous proportions. Many questions have been raised over the past months over the identity of those who are behind the bloody massacres in Algeria's townships. The Algerian government has resisted attempts to create independent fact-finding missions while the Islamists have pointed the finger at the government and foreign elements that stand to gain from the country's current instability.

Even in Egypt, some extremists claim that the terrorists may have been manipulated by foreign powers. But the conspiracy theorists, in spite of raising a number of valid questions, also admit that basically the confrontation is between the secular government and religious groups seeking to impose a Muslim state.

Political Islam forced itself on the Middle Eastern scene with the triumph of the Iranian revolution in 1979. But Muslim reformists, also seeking to establish an Islamic state, have been active for decades. The Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt had sought to rebuild society along Islamic teachings and rules as far back as the 1940s. Their short-lived alliance with the Free Officers on the eve of the 1953 revolution ended violently few months later.

Confrontations between the state and the Islamists have taken place in many Arab countries including Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Morocco and Sudan.

But militant Islam is a relative newcomer and it appears only when political Islam has been purged and stamped out. This is one way to look at what is happening now in Algeria and Egypt. The Islamists remain a minority, Muslims everywhere are horrified and shocked when they see the bloody images of victims in

Algeria or when terrorists strike at unsuspecting tourists in Egypt. Still, small extremist groups keep appearing everyday and the campaign to liquidate them does not appear to be working.

While we should explain to the world that these fundamentalist groups do not represent mainstream Islam, we should also admit that this dangerous phenomenon is not a temporary one. Unless we address it comprehensively, militant Islam will eventually force its agenda on the region.

One way of dealing with it would be to look into its causes and study the reasons that create such a fertile ground for militant, religiously driven rebels whose perception of the world around them is blinded by their zeal and hatred of the status quo.

One cannot do so without looking into the political, social and economic realities that shape the region today. Sadly, enough, fundamentalism will continue to attract followers so long as political and economic imbalances continue to exist in this part of the world. ■



Scenes like these continue to filter in the western mass media, giving Islam a bad image.

Middle East Beat
by Khairi Janbek
The USA and US

ONE CAN say that the title of this article implies that there is an American foreign policy for us, and the term implies that we are defined by one category of definition or another. However, facts seem to indicate that the USA is currently in a process of soul searching regarding its outlook towards the world, and their view of "us".

American foreign policy, internationally, has been fluctuating between the concepts of "keep them guessing," and "active participation," and depending on the area of interest within the global responsibilities of the US, as the only major power in the world. Its sources of economic and military strength are still unrivalled, and its room for maneuvering has still wide dimensions.

Obviously, its tasks are not easy, due to the variety of divergent problems around the world, and the priority of dealing with them according to the most urgent and closest to home interest. Within this many voices have been raised, hoping for the USA to follow a policy of disengagement, and isolationism from world affairs. But indications suggest that America will continue to play a dominant role in world affairs.

In its soul-searching process, US foreign policy formulators have come into a stumbling block: globalism and particularism. This dialectic has always baffled all parties working on international formulas: it had even baffled the ex-Soviet dictum of international revolution, prompting them to admit at the time, that there is no blueprint for revolution. In as much as there is no blueprint for democracy now, all what the USA can do, is to understand the common values and aims, that permeate systems of government around the world, and formulate accordingly their own approach of realism and idealism. This is the dilemma of American foreign policy formulators, whom have not yet considered the human dimension in international relations.

As for the term "us," and the American outlook towards it, there seems to be an implicit definition of our world, and it tends to be formulated in terms of an arch that stretches from North Africa to the Caucasus, Central Asia, Balkans, and passing through the Middle East. Unfortunately, this arch has been termed as the arch of trouble or potential trouble. And what the US faces is a cauldron of ethnic, regional, and even religious strife or potential strife, of which an important part is the Arab-Israeli conflict.

It is important to note that the active participation of the US in the peace process is only a small part of its efforts and worries in the arch of trouble. Perhaps, we can consider ourselves lucky that the American administration is following an active policy when concerning us, rather than keep us guessing, and American bi-partisan support for Israel plays a major part in following this approach.

In the scheme of events, we seem to occupy a very small space, and one wonders whether we should be grateful for that for the time being. Under this regional categorization, the USA is facing certain nations that seem to believe in Zero-sum gains, rather than negotiations, ethnic victory rather than coexistence, and on top of it control of vast natural resources.

The USA is aware that conflicts within this regional arch, can make the preceding one look like a small brawl, therefore, the Arab-Israeli peace process is important in terms of a conflict resolution paradigm, but represents a very small portion of the USA concerns in our world.

It is always important, to keep reminding the American foreign policy formulators of the human costs related to their decisions, and the values which are shared by many of us, with what they hold in their idealism. ■

Letters to the Editor

Road safety

To The Editor,

As a foreigner in Jordan, I would like to take the liberty to address some concerns that I hope will be of benefit to the people of Jordan.

I recall some years ago that the Jordanian authorities introduced by law the use of seat belts in vehicles. For some time, it was quite popular by the traffic police to fine drivers that did not wear seat belts and one observed, quite a few, complied with the regulation. This was a very positive development.

Today, the situation is sadly changing with very few wearing seat belts. The traffic police appear not to be concerned about it. Parking and speeding fines are however, promptly presented without delay.

As most readers may know, a major car accident happened some months ago in Paris and out of four people in the car, only one used a seat belt and was also the only survivor.

As most are aware, air bags are now available for most recent new vehicles. This is for the safety of the driver and passengers.

Many others and I have observed a large number of vehicles on the roads in Jordan with children in the front seats sitting on the lap of adults or sitting/standing without any protection or safety.

In case of an accident, the child would be the air bag for the adult, and would protect the adult. I do not wish to think what will happen with the child in case of an accident. If the car were fitted with an air bag for the front passenger, it would most likely do more harm than good to the child.

Please introduce and implement/enforce a law that prohibits children below the age of 12 years to sit in the front seat of a car including on the lap of a person.

Please enforce the present law that drivers and passengers are using seat belts.

What is lacking and is urgently required now is a Government campaign to inform citizens about traffic safety in general and in particular about the need to wear seat

belts and not permitting children to sit in the front seat on the lap of adults. I hope the Ministry concerned agree and will do something. The sooner, the better and safer.

A daily campaign on TV, daily advertisements in newspapers and an information circular to be given to all that register their vehicle and receive drivers license would save lives and make Jordanian roads safer to all. To provide such information and to ensure compliance by all should also be a priority for the traffic police.

Leiv E. Herheim
Bayader Wadi Seer
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Amman 11814

The 100 heroines project

To The Editor,

I visited The Star, Jordan's Political, Economic, and Cultural Weekly Online web page (a link from women3rdworld.miningco.com), and found it very interesting. I am working on a volunteer project (based in Rochester, NY,

USA) that is an outgrowth of the 1995 UN Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China in 1995. The project's conclusion will also coincide with the 150th anniversary of the first women's convention in the US—the beginnings of the women's rights movement here. The objective of the project is to honor 100 living women from 100 different countries around the world for their work to achieve equality and freedom for women.

I am looking for avenues to reach women in countries around the world to solicit nominations for heroines, and was wondering if you would consider helping to spread the word. For example, would you highlight this effort on your web page, and provide a link to our web site? Would you forward this information to your friends and colleagues? Would you nominate a heroine?

You can find more information about this project on our web page (<http://www.ni.edu/~shcsl/>), including information about who we are and how the project got started. And/or you may contact me for more information.

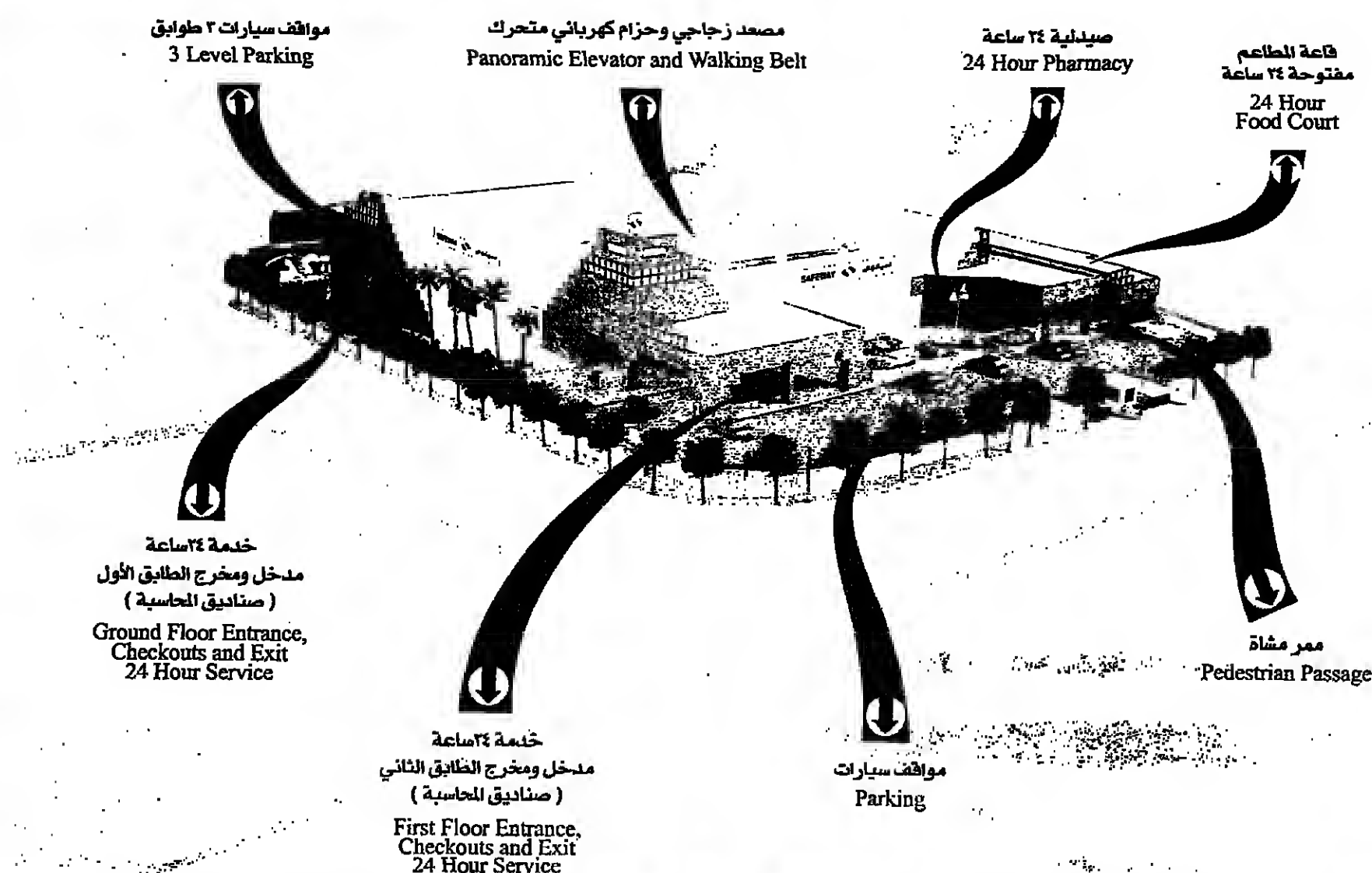
Regards,
MJ Hannan
100 Heroines Nomination Committee

Lurie's NewsCartoon



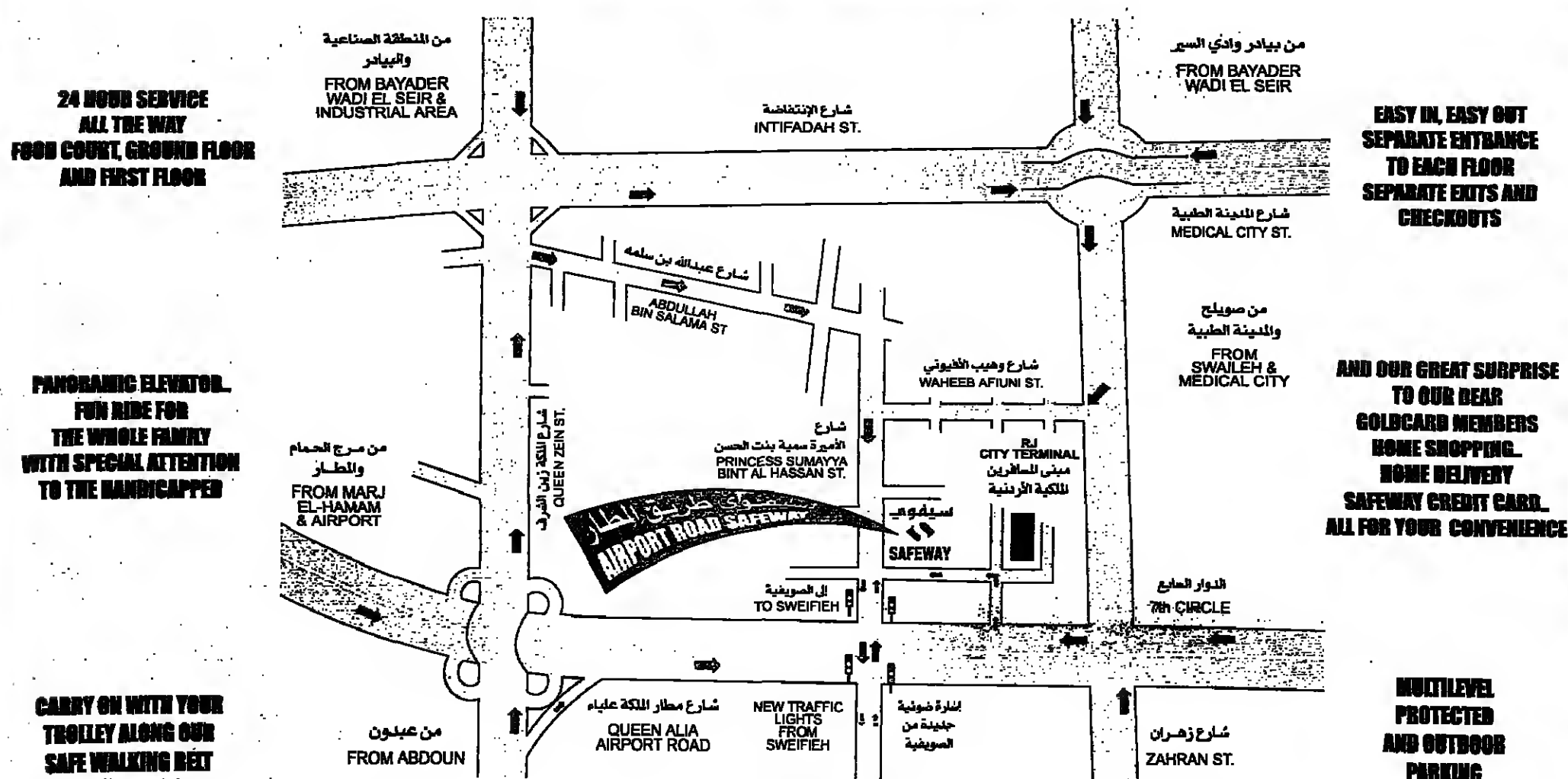
(News Item: The United States bought 21 MIG-29 attack planes from Moldova, a former Soviet Union state, that was contemplating selling them to Iran. 14 of the planes are capable of carrying nuclear warheads.)

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هاتف: ۸۱۵۵۵۸ (۶-۹۶۲)، فاکس: ۸۱۵۶۱۵ (۶-۹۶۲)

Business scene

■ The cabinet approved the state's 1998 budget which is estimated at JD1.987 billion. It shows a rise of JD 140 million compared with last year's. The deficit in the budget is anticipated at JD 37 million against JD 56 million in the present year. This deficit will be covered by grants and loans. Growth ratio in next year's budget is estimated at 6 percent.

■ The European-Jordanian partnership agreement was signed last Monday in Brussels in the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan. Minister of Planning Dr Rima Khalaf signed the agreement. The agreement was initially signed last April in Malta. The pact will be effective after it is endorsed by the EU parliament to replace the former trade agreement concluded between Europe and Jordan in 1977. The signing of the agreement will enable Jordan to become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). It includes a package of protocols covering political, security, financial, social and humanitarian aspects. According to the agreement, Jordanian products will be given free access to European markets, create new job opportunities, simplify exchange of manpower, technology and expertise transfer. The trade balance between Jordan and the EU is in favor of the latter. Jordanian imports from the EU stand at \$800 million per year while its exports to these markets do not exceed \$100 million.

■ Jordanian-Japanese negotiations held last week concentrated on ways of enhancing economic and technical cooperation. It mainly focused on the Japanese aid program to support development plans in the health, water, environment and education sectors. The Japanese aid program stresses on improving the industrial sector and boosting tourism and trade. Besides, it seeks to provide assistance for the Kingdom in preparing economic strategies to combat pollution and train cadres in this field. In 1995, the size of Japanese aid and grants given to Jordan reached 3.3 billion Japanese yen, while in 1996 they rose to 5 billion yen. This year, aid is expected to reach 3 billion yen.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 26 November

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
Sfr	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
TRL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

Banking experts say states must be ready for global challenges

By Iham Sadeq
Star Staff writer

THE CONCEPT of globalization has become the name of the game, even banks could not escape from implementing such a strategy.

However, some consider it as a pressing need that would lead to improving quality and boost productivity, there are many others who argue that it brings many challenges to all sectors in the developing countries.

But the trend has blessings as well as curses. In respect to financial institutions, bankers wonder if giant banks will swallow smaller ones and may even threaten monetary stability in some countries.

In a conference held lately in Amman by the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Studies, participants stressed that amidst new challenges Arab banks should form inter-banking blocs by mergers or establish new big entities. Arab countries do have the potential for creating such bodies because they already have financial surpluses and qualified cadres.

Speaking on mergers among banks, Mr Jeffrey A. Bennett, managing director of Merrill Lynch International, a banking and investment institute in the UK says that "over the last 20 years banks have been consolidated, a great deal of consolidation is in Europe and Japan".

He tells The Star that Jordan is now prepared for globalization and "has successfully implemented and conceived its economic reform program. It also managed to build confidence of the public in privatizing its corporations."

Also he suggests that Jordanians have

adapted to the requirements of such policy.

"We have to cope with all recent developments and not separate ourselves from the world, but first of all our banking system has to be consolidated," says Mr Adnan Al Sallakh, general manager of the Export and Finance Bank.

He tells The Star that this can be achieved by concluding mergers among small banks to create stronger banks qualified for international competition.

But Mr Al Sallakh stresses that the right way to achieve this goal is to build a "clean" management that puts the right man in the right place.

"We must fight against corruption and clean our establishments to guarantee success," he says reiterating that globalization imposes challenges and may carry many risks within that we should be fully prepared for.

Among 15 operating banks in Jordan there are three that dominate about 65 percent of the whole banking sector in the kingdom. However, there are many smaller banks which control 35 percent of the market. This fact implies that mergers have to be made among these banks to create a sound bank-



Mr Nabulsi (left), Dr Majali (center), and Dr Hudeib (right)

ing system that is ready for globalization.

The Central Bank of Jordan has lately introduced a prudent policy by asking these banks to raise their capital to at least JD 20 million before the end of this year. Such a step is being encouraged by the government in order to boost their financial solvency and performance.

Sharing this view also is Ms Evgeniya Martinaitute, the executive director of Lithuanian Banking, Insurance and Banking Institute. She says that since Lithuania got its independence from the Soviet

Union in 1991 "We started privatizing all institutions and now the private sector is dominant in the economy."

She elaborates that privatization comes as a vital process to achieve globalization and enter the free market economy. But as Al Sallakh says, she points out that corruption and bureaucracy should be eliminated to guarantee success and be able to enter into global blocs.

Referring to her country's experience in privatization, she suggests that after visiting Jordan she realized that the two countries have gone through similar problems to enhance

the role of the private sector and boost the quality and standard of its efficiency and productivity.

Head of the Arab Banking Federation Mr Mahmoud Abdul Aziz says that by the next millennium the world will be converted to "a small village that has no barriers, no nationality and no customs". Yet it is imperative to do our best to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks of globalization.

He adds that this can be achieved by a professional management and a qualified manpower to lead the process.

Financial institutions race for wheels of change

AMMAN (Star)—Banking and financial institutions are seen as the basic economic pillars of any country as they play a great role in securing finance for various productive sectors of the economy. Banks are becoming even more important especially in the light of the race towards globalization which is seen by many as an inevitable strategy. Ignoring it, is interpreted by supporters as foolhardy.

It is with this in mind that the Amman-based Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Sciences (an Arab League institution) held its seventh annual conference titled "Globalization of Banks and Financial Institutions in Amman, at the InterContinental Hotel this week.

The venue which was attended by senior and financial experts, governors of Central Banks and top bankers from various countries around the world, was opened under the auspices of Prime Minister Dr Abdul Salam Al Majali.

Welcoming the audience, Dr Al Majali said that Jordan was among the pioneers in following economic reform programs whose objective is to achieve more openness in a gradual and well-studied manner to achieve positive results.

He described the conference as a way to establish true interaction between Arab and international experts to

conclude a balanced access towards globalization.

Furthermore this trend is being tackled by the participants, the prime minister added, in term of its impact on both developed and developing countries.

Also speaking at the opening session was the Academy's president Dr Mustafa Hudeib who says that globalization "means new framework of economic aspects, based on inclusive globalization, in an open regional that has no local or regional borders or restrictions to one marketplace..."

Dr Hudeib added that such openness will include mutual and free exchange of human resources and financial potentials in addition to technology and information transfer.

Dr Mohammad said Al Nabulsi, the head of the Academy's board and former governor of the Central Bank of Jordan described the new creation of blocs such as the EU, the Americas and the Japanese bloc, as a transitional period to even wider international blocs and open markets.

Such a market, Dr Nabulsi said will be marked by its competition for the best, the lowest cost and the quickest ability to meet needs.

So, the globalization process is supposed to satisfy jointly productive and consuming requirements via the exchange of commodities and services in a very flexible manner.

Dr Nabulsi elaborated say-

ing that such a trend brings new challenges and pressures to remove all barriers for the easy movement of services to and from our countries.

"Though we still do not maintain the required level for globalization, we must be fully prepared to enter into global competition," he said.

Globalization is moving on in its upward tunnel, Dr Hudeib draws samples to such an issue, saying that the size of international trade to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is going up tremendously. It doubled compared to the 1950, maintaining such an increase was made, most precisely, over the last decade.

Also, he added, the stake of the developing countries in international trade went up from 23 percent in 1985 to 29 percent in 1995.

Even links among these developing countries were boosted as their inter-trade rose from 31 percent of their total trade in 1985 to 37 percent in 1995.

In addition, the developing countries have become more integrated in the universal financial system. The net capital flows to these countries reached \$150 billion annually between 1993-1996.

In 1996 such flows rose to \$200 billion. This is not merely the size of flows but also their nature has improved to include, in addition to banking facilities, greater investment portfolios and direct investments.

Aid for scientific research is a must

SCIENCE AND technology are the main elements for improving industry and enhance the quality of products. This is to meet the required quality and industrial specifications.

Indeed, this is one of the objectives of the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST). Always at the forefront, it seeks to create an industrial culture to help scientific and technological research.

Referring to the necessity to encourage such research, the assistant general secretary of the HCST, Ms Nansi Bakir stressed the importance of science and technology to the economic, social and cultural development of the country.

"The public and the private sector are to cooperate in building the national scientific and

technological base in the Kingdom," she said.

The council is also responsible for securing finance and required support for various activities to fulfill the targets of the national policy.

Speaking about the budget allocated for scientific research and development, Ms Bakir said it should not be less than 1 percent of the Gross National Product (GNP), just as it is the case with all advanced countries.

"This means that annual allocations for the sciences should at least be JD 5 million."

For the HCST's 1998 budget, Ms Bakir said that it is still under negotiations but it is expected to be about JD3.5 million.

The council pays much effort in enhancing the performance, productivity and competence of

the industrial sector by providing many incentives such as the supply of all the needed equipment, besides the qualified expertise.

However, she pointed that expenditure from the industrial sector on scientific research doesn't exceed 10 percent.

This is low compared with that of the developed industrial countries which allocate at least 40-50 percent for such purposes.

Ms Bakir said that the council is planning to co-operate with the Ministry of Industry and Trade to secure more financial support for scientific research and training.



Ms Nancy Bakir

Al Fares '97, great show for the horses

AL FARES '97, the second International Exhibition for Horse and Equipment was staged at the Dubai World Trade Center between 23-26 November. It had around 100 exhibitors representing a wide spectrum of products and services related to the global equine industry.

Held under the patronage of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Dubai Crown Prince and the UAE Defence Minister, Al Fares '97 is the only showcase for equine trade in the Middle East.

The patronage of General Sheikh Mohammed, prominent and highly respected horse-owner in the world with a track-record of winning a string of prestigious international racing events over the past few years, underscores the significance of Al Fares for the entire Arab region and the equine industry," said Mr Fayez Ahmed, Managing Partner of Al Fajer Information & Services, the organizers of this event.

Countries represented at the exhibition include Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Sweden, Syria, the UAE, the UK and the USA. A major highlight was three national pavilions comprising exhibitors from France, Germany and Britain.

"As a prime meeting point for suppliers and manufacturers, horse owners and breeders, artists, trainers and jockeys, veterinarians, bloodstock agents and equestrian professionals from around the world, Al Fares '97 is designed to complement the



Fayez Ahmed

image of Dubai, the venue of the world's richest horse racing event—the Dubai World Cup—as well as one of the most sought after training grounds for horses," Mr Ahmed pointed out.

The impressive line-up of visitors expected at the event included professional horsemen and representatives of most Arab equestrian clubs and official bodies, in addition to hundreds of leading traders and suppliers from Europe, the Far East, Australia, Asia, the Middle East and North America.

Exhibitors represent the whole gamut of equestrian supply and service industries seeking a strategic launch-pad to penetrate the lucrative and flourishing Arab equine scene.

Products on display comprised the whole range of horse accessories, feed, wears, horse care products, pharmaceuticals, veterinary



products, herbal medicines, riding equipment, clothing and accessory equipment, floorings, stable fittings and fencing.

The four-day exhibition, which enjoys the support of the UAE Equestrian and Racing Federation, the Emirates Racing Association, Dubai Racing Club, the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Government of Dubai, Department of tourism & Commerce Marketing, was a great success.

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

On Line

http://www.arabia.com/star

MARKET WATCH 22-25 November

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Highest: Medical Supplies 5.98 Lowest: Al Taseer 5.00	Highest: Medical Supplies 5.56 Lowest: General Investment 5.07	Highest: Al Aser Investment 5.17 Lowest: General Investment 4.82	Highest: Al-Jawhar 5.06 Lowest: Al Aser Investment 4.92
Highest: Equitable Investment 4.76 Lowest: Arab Bank Cooperation 3.51	Highest: Arab Bank Cooperation 5.00 Lowest: Arab Bank Cooperation 4.71	Highest: JMC 5.56 Lowest: Arab Bank Cooperation 5.00	Highest: Al-Azra Food Industry 5.26 Lowest: Arab Bank Cooperation 4.63

General Price Pointer	171.820	171.880	171.500	171.230
Trade Volume	1189569	758768	2335080	678773
Stock Volume	642916	638662	1061706	769473

Highest Traded Stocks	Arab Bank 172580	Al-Ahl Bank 97147	Development Bank 912518	Jordan Oil Industry 132245
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All data provided by ACCESS Tel: 646868 Fax: 646949

هكذا من الأصل

AROUND TOWN

New Safeway branch opens

Mayor of the Greater Amman Municipality, Dr Mamdouh Al Abbadi opens a new branch of the Safeway supermarket, Tuesday, situated at the beginning of Airport Road in the 7th Circle. Top dignitaries, businessmen as well as members of the diplomatic corps attended the opening.



Café de Paris seeks to bring the French ambience to Amman

AMMAN (Star)—The Café de Paris is the place to visit. Written in golden letters on top of its window is simply *Pâtisserie and Boulangerie*. Young people and well-to-do ladies share a cup of tea and watch other people as they leave to the next scene, the cinema. Their voice is muffled by the pleasant sound of a fountain and the sweet music of a saxophone.

"It's not enough to blow like that when he's playing. That, I didn't expect. I think it's his last evening," explains Jean-Pierre Simon, general manager of the Café. The man is not joking. He has all the trappings of the Sheraton trademark.

Mr Simon spent most of his career in the biggest hotel company in the world. "I started working as an apprentice cook, before becoming a chef in one of the Sheraton hotels in Asia."

Now, I am the manager of this sort of places", he says as he looks around. He defends the Sheraton name and adds that everything must be perfect.

The saxophonist has to go. No problem. He will be fired and Mr Simon has already thought about replacing him with a French accordionist from Paris.

In this type of business, all the details are important. Café de Paris does not belong to Sheraton but to Nabih Mnasher

and Yousef Taber. The two families use Sheraton's skill in order to build a huge entertainment center.

After the cinema and the Café are three other floors: a night-club, a Mediterranean restaurant and a Lebanese restaurant. The last stone should be put by next spring.

The concept behind this building is simple. Mr Simon adds. "Our customers can visit all the places without leaving the center." The quality of all services have the Sheraton hospitality which will open as a Five-Star hotel in early 1999.

Waiting to sleep in Sheraton sheets, Jordanians can spend a good time under the warm street lamps using the heat of this Parisian plaza.

Others may prefer the weather-tight atmosphere of the very smart salon de thé (a tea room).

For people in a hurry, they can take away ice-creams, pastries and even pizzas from the Café de Paris.



All the sweets and cakes like the opera and coconut cakes and strawberry chocolates are made on the place while the raw materials are especially imported. On the other hand, you need to be an expert to make Swiss chocolates or French croissants which are also found in the Café de Paris.

Putting pen to paper

Social history through the Amman labyrinth

By Ibtisam Awadat
Special to The Star

Al Mudeer Al'am (General Manager) is his first novel, a simple story that looks at those who achieve power, and begin to misuse it whilst taking advantage of others at the same time.

Ziad Qasem, a Jordanian writer who has not achieved the position he deserves, says "at first, I didn't intend to be a writer, however my had experience with the managers and officials I dealt with frustrated me so much, that I decided to express it openly in my first novel, which was published in 1988. He says that his friends and close associates were a great source of encouragement.

"The story is narrated by a secretary.

who has to deal with more than one person in authority." Through this, the writer is trying to show "how miserable life can be when some individuals control the lives of others in the community."

Although simple and direct in style, his first novel was a flop, no one hardly took any notice of it. But the up and coming author persevered in his writings.

In 1990, he published what was to become a true piece of art. *Abnaa' Al Qal'a* (Sons of the Citadel) was a great hit right from the start, despite the fact that it was only a limited edition that was distributed among friends and relatives.

After much egging on from other writers and artists, the book went into a second edition, two years later.

"I was born in Amman in 1945, and noticed all the changes which took place in

the city. I lived downtown besides the 'Al Sail' (stream). Amman was a little village then with few cars around," Al Qasem said.

"I also remember clearly Amman's Market, the big and the small one, where we used to go shopping, he adds. In the novel which is going to be made into a television series, he depicts the social changes that happened in Amman and contrasting them between the old and the new.

In his novel, Mr Qasem talks about "how Amman developed into a city with huge buildings, crowded with people." But there was also more tangible changes.

"The social relationships have been affected—in the past, the whole neighborhood used to be one big family, you shared everything, but today, I wouldn't know the name of my next door neighbor."

But in a subdued manner, the author says "maybe this is the price of development, in running after money and technology we forget the essential things in our lives, our good relationship with others."

This is also his first crack at writing a television scenario based on the book. He says that "it's a message for nationalism since a lot of the scenes are about social daily life that starts with the eviction of the Palestinians in 1948 till 1967."

But today he continues. *Abnaa' Al Qal'a* (The Storm) is a 1558-page epic. "The Storm" tells a story of different generations. The first starts in 1850 during the Ottoman Empire and ends at World War I.

The second generation begins from the World War I to the Maysaloon battle in Syria in 1920, and the establishment of the Emirate of Trans-Jordan.

In this work, the author brings the readers a live image of the historical events which took place in the region, carrying his characters to France, Brazil, USA, and many countries.

The author so far published four parts of the Storm and the other two parts will appear soon.

Fortune Promoseven, Bahrain wins major award for cover design



(From left): Mr Al Saffar, Ms Mansour, Mr Buchan, Mr Miknas, and Ms Daboul

THE ELEVENTH International Annual Reports Competition (IARC) honouring international achievement in yearly reports, awarded Fortune Promoseven (FP7), Bahrain the silver award for cover design this year. Sponsored by the International Academy of Communications, Art and Sciences/MacComan Inc., IARC appraised the Arig HealthCare brochure cover design 1996 as worth of the silver prize for 1997.

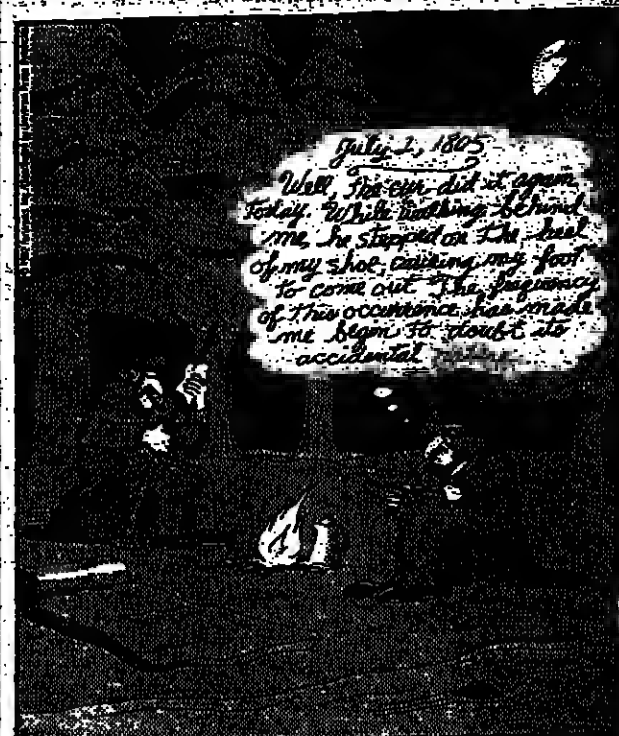
Mr Akram Miknas, (president and chief executive officer), Mr Tariq Al Saffar, (managing director of Fortune Promoseven Bahrain), and Ms Paula Mansour, (account manager, FP7 Bahrain), acknowledged Mr Ron Buchan, (Arig Health and General Insurance company's managing director), and Ms Claude Daboul, (Arig Health and General Insurance company's Marketing Manager) as co-winners of this prestigious award. This award further signals their collateral pursuit of excellence.

In addition to this, FP7 was also accredited the London International Advertising Finalist Award, 1997, and The New York Festival's Finalist Award, 1997, under the corporate brochure category for the same Arig HealthCare cover entry design.

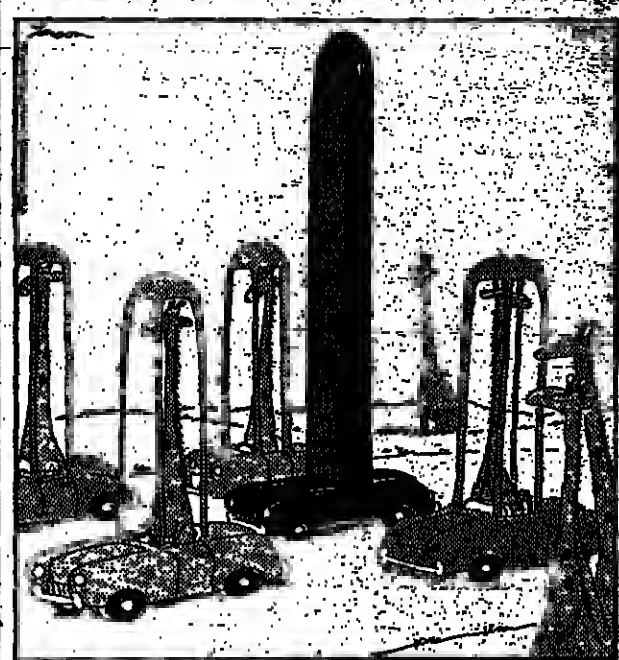
FP7 Bahrain won the 1997 Finalist International Advertising Award for the Sony Triniton Cat Billboard entry. The same Billboard also won the Finalist Award, from The New York Festival for the international competition for print advertising and design 1997.

Founded in 1968 by its current President and CEO, Mr Akram Miknas, Fortune Promoseven expanded rapidly and today it has 14 network offices strategically located throughout the Middle East and North Africa. The agency represents the interests of a large and diversified client base; marketing products and services worldwide. Multinational and local clients alike are serviced from the network offices. The agency employs staff from all parts of the world with a strong Arab base to provide and implement a wide range of marketing communications strategies.

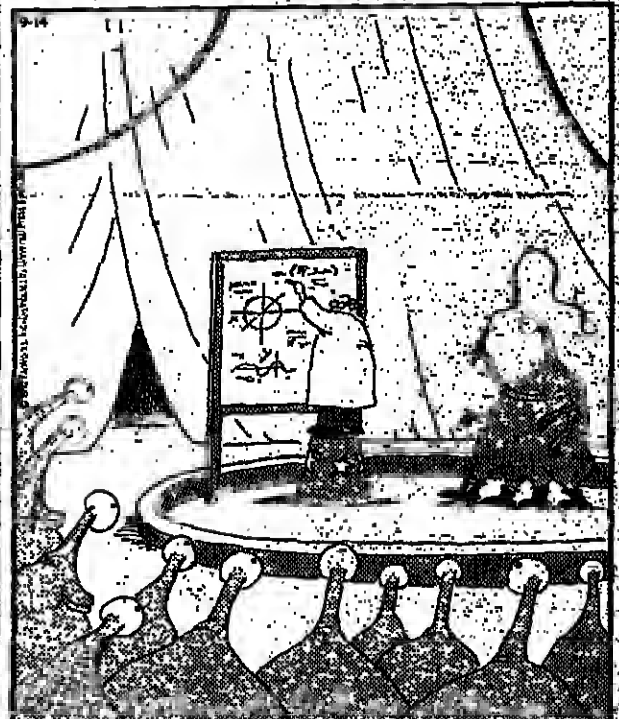
THE EARLY



Tensions mount on the Lewis and Clark expedition



Giraffe limousines



Abducted by an alien circus company, Professor Doyle is forced to write calculus equations in center ring



"OK, ma'am, you said you wanted your husband to put the newspaper down or you'd blow him away.... Did he respond?"

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Magical Weavings, an exhibition of Wall Hangings and Rugs by Bashir Kathem & others at Jordan Rivers Design continues till 4 Dec.

■ Art Exhibition titled (*Journeys Within*) by the Pakistani pioneer artist Gulgee and his son the sculptor Amin Gulgee, opens at Jordan National Gallery for Fine Art continues till 15 December.

■ Art Exhibition by Khalid Khreis continues at Institut Cervantes till 8 Dec.

Christmas Bazaar

■ Annual Christmas charity bazaar by the American Union of Amman at the Marriott Hotel on Friday, 28 Nov.

■ Annual YWCA Christmas classical choir at the Royal Cultural Center From 3 Dec-7 Dec



A view from the Amman Citadel (Al Qal'a mountain)

The Star's GUY PE

Programs on JTV
from 29 November — 5 December

Amman cinemas

- Galleria I (Tel: 079 33430): Al Maseer (Arabic)
- Galleria II (Tel: 079 33430): Nothing to Lose
- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149): The Chamber
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149): Beethoven's 2nd
- Plaza (Tel: 699238): Al Maseer (Arabic)
- Concord I (Tel: 677420): Mr Bean
- Concord II (Tel: 677420): Sleep Walkers

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Twinkle
- 2:30—Muppet Show
- 3:00—Pumpkin Patch
- 3:15—World of Geo
- 4:00—The Valley Between
- 4:30—Neighbors
- 5:00—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Are you Been Served
- 8:00—Newly Weds
- 8:30—Prism
- 9:10—Time Trax
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Feature Film
- 12:00—Ellen

SUNDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Little Rascals
- 2:30—Jonny Quest
- 2:50—The Magic School Bus
- 3:00—Energy Express
- 3:40—Lucky Luke
- 4:00—American Chart Show
- 4:30—Tarzan
- 6:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
- 8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
- 8:30—Hotshots
- 9:10—Renegade
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Drama

MONDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—The Show With the Mouse
- 2:30—The Cowboy of the Moons
- 3:00—Gillette Sports Special
- 3:15—Riding High
- 3:30—Animal Show
- 4:00—Maver Twist
- 4:30—Neighbors
- 5:15—French Programs
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Murphy Brown
- 8:00—The Health Show



Oprah Winfrey, Thursday at 9:10 pm

- 8:30—Babylo 5
- 9:10—Highlander
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Emergency Room
- 11:15—Cosmos (Doc.)

TUESDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—Sandocan
- 2:30—C.R.O.
- 3:00—Skippy
- 3:30—The Album Show
- 4:15—Square One TV
- 5:15—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—You Bet Your Life
- 8:00—Skeetoo Coast
- 8:30—Encounter
- 9:10—Hollywood Remembers
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Margaret Volant

THURSDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—New Kids on the Block
- 2:30—My Little Fairy Tale
- 3:00—America's Funniest People
- 3:30—He Shoot He Scores
- 4:00—National Geographic
- 4:30—The Boy from Andromeda
- 5:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Trivial Pursuit
- 8:00—Parenthood
- 8:30—Lois and Clark (Superman)
- 9:10—Oprah Winfrey Show
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Feature Film
- 12:00—Music Show

FRIDAY

- 2:00—Holy Koran
- 2:10—The Adventure of Teddy Ruxpin
- 2:30—Fred and Barney
- 3:00—Wish Bone
- 3:30—Lucky Luke
- 4:00—Family Matters
- 4:30—NRA
- 5:00—French Programs
- 7:00—News in French
- 7:30—News Headlines
- 7:35—Life on the Internet
- 8:00—Are you Being Served
- 8:30—Adventures of Brisco County
- 9:10—The History Makers
- 10:00—News at Ten
- 10:30—Best Seller
- 11:30—Daddy's Girls

PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

- SAMEDI**
5:00—Bêtes pas Bêtes
5:15—Regarde le monde
5:30—Secrets de famille

- 6:00—La Chine
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine

DIMANCHE

- 5:00—Micro Kids
- 5:15—Regarde le monde
- 5:30—Secrets de famille
- 6:00—Magazine
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine pour tous

LUNDI

- 5:00—Bêtes pas Bêtes
- 5:15—Regarde le monde
- 5:30—Secrets de famille
- 6:00—Thalassa
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine scientifique

MARDI

- 5:00—Bêtes pas Bêtes
- 5:15—Regarde le monde
- 5:30—Secrets de famille
- 6:00—Savoir plus santé
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Orient sur Seine

MERCREDI

- 5:00—Micro Kids
- 5:15—Regarde le monde
- 5:30—Secrets de famille
- 6:00—Ushuaia
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—E = Mc

JEUDI

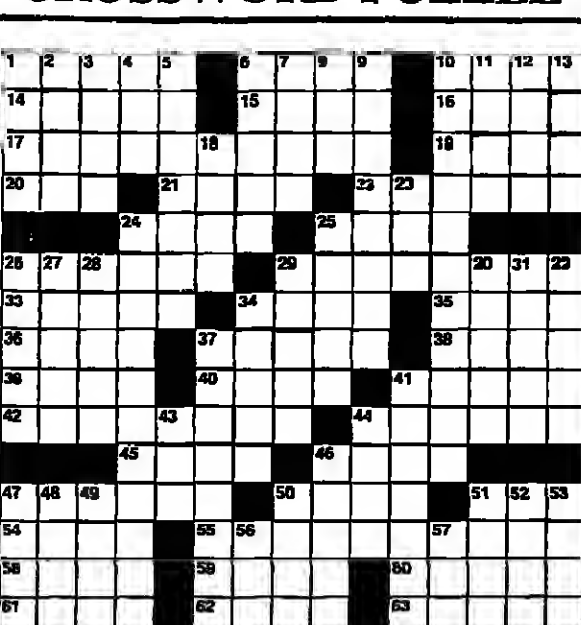
- 5:00—L'invité de marque
- 5:30—Etonnant et drôle
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Le dessous des cartes

VENREDI

- 5:30—Le neuvième jour
- 7:00—Le Journal
- 7:15—Magazine

Programs are subject to change by JTV

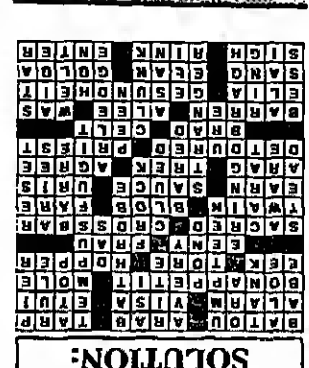
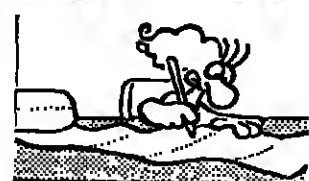
CROSSWORD PUZZLE



- ACROSS**
- 1 LA creek
 - 6 Spirited house
 - 10 Wilded cover
 - 14 Warning device
 - 15 Travel document
 - 16 Needle case
 - 17 Enjoy your meal, Plémet
 - 19 Double agent
 - 20 It's a mouse!
 - 21 Raced
 - 22 Recapsule
 - 24 — messy
 - 25 Helmut's wife
 - 26 Holy
 - 29 Pole-vaulter
 - 33 "Tom Sawyer"
 - 34 Amorphous mass
 - 35 Travel cost
 - 36 Work for
 - 37 Beardless, e.g.
 - 38 Author Leon
- DOWN**
- 1 Ruth
 - 2 Lame
 - 3 Jack
 - 4 Openings
 - 5 Indefinite number
 - 6 TV actor
 - 7 The — of Spring
 - 8 — was saying
 - 9 Lounging
 - 10 Time flies, brus
 - 11 Upon
 - 12 Regulation
 - 13 Wharf
 - 18 Duck's milieu
 - 23 Alliance
 - 24 Line by
 - 25 Assistant
 - 26 Campbell
 - 27 Place
 - 27 On one's toes
 - 28 Gem weight
 - 29 Give gully information
 - 30 Wilkes
 - 31 Zodiac sign
 - 32 Adjust
 - 34 Revealed
 - 37 Unknown person
 - 41 Roone — of TV
 - 43 Actress Mary
 - 44 Hammer head
 - 45 Out sound
 - 47 Mrs. Truman
 - 48 Jal —
 - 49 Wedding symbol
 - 50 Slippery —
 - 51 Strip of leather
 - 52 Assistant
 - 53 Headliner
 - 56 Yale student
 - 57 Lover's term

OFF THE WALL

ABILITY IS WHAT
YOU'RE CAPABLE OF
DOING. MOTIVATION
DETERMINES WHAT
YOU DO. ATTITUDE
IS HOW WELL YOU
DO IT.



— THIS WEEK'S — HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: The Sagittarius sun brings joy and congeniality to all. That's important to remember when the Capricorn moon places restrictions on many.

Aries (March 21-April 19). Responsibilities clash with your travel plans. You'll soon start finding ways to break free.

Taurus (April 20-May 20). You're doing very well considering the handicap you're under. Finish up a tough job while you still have the advantage.

Gemini (May 21-June 21). Pool resources with a friend to get what you want. The same goes for travel. Together you can get there.

Cancer (June 22-July 22). Your workload is intense, but a partner helps out. Don't get into an argument. It'll only waste time. Pool your resources to get something you both want badly.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22). Although your attitude is good, the workload is horrendous. Don't complain. Just get it done. Tackle a tough assignment so you can play with your mate.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Make a romantic commitment. That bond helps you handle confusion at home. You might not have time for much, so don't schedule anything.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). Read the manual so you can solve a problem at home all by yourself. You'll be so proud once you have.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Pay attention. The skills you are learning could lead to an increase in income. Plan ahead to solve a problem at home.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Mooney's tight, especially if you say so. Don't let anybody talk you out of your hard-won resources.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). You're super-efficient. Push yourself to finish an old job quickly. Slick maneuvering leads to an increase in income.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). You're under a bit of pressure, but your friends help you out. Let them know what you need, and they'll come up with amazing ideas.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20). You and your friends can outwit an older person. Don't be too obvious about it. The plot thickens. You may discover work you've forgotten to turn in.

Nothing to Lose

3:30 / 6:00 / 8:15 / 10:45

The Descent

3:30 / 6:00 / 8:15 / 10:45

Starting Thursday, May 1st,
shop from the comfort of your home!

Orbit Express Shop

Every day from 7am GMT

Home shopping at its best!
Unique products unavailable in shops
Easy to purchase - Order by phone
Convenient credit card payment
Home delivery of products

Everyone can shop

Tune into
The free-to-air Promotional channel on
Arabsat 2A, 26° East
Channel 2 on the Orbit Network

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star



La Maison d'Orient à Jérusalem pas visitée, Arafat pas vu

Le président palestinien Yasser Arafat a minimisé la décision des ministres européens de ne pas se rendre à la Maison d'Orient, la représentation officielle de l'OLP, lors de sa visite à Jérusalem. «L'important n'est pas qu'ils visitent la Maison d'Orient mais qu'ils soutiennent totalement notre position sur Jérusalem, ce qu'ils font», a affirmé M. Arafat à la presse à l'issue d'un entretien avec le chef de la diplomatie française Hubert Védrine (voir page 10). M. Védrine, comme les autres ministres européens venus à Jérusalem depuis le 10 septembre, de se rendre à la Maison d'Orient au cours de sa visite d'une journée dans les territoires occupés par l'armée israélienne, sous l'impulsion notamment de la France, avait pourtant fait des vœux pour la Maison d'Orient, ces dernières années, le symbole de son refus d'accepter l'annexion israélienne de Jérusalem-est. Mais les Français et les autres Européens ont fait marche arrière depuis l'élection du Premier ministre de droite Benjamin Netanyahu en Israël, après que ce dernier ait menacé de décréter la fermeture de la Maison d'Orient si les ministres européens continuaient à s'y rendre.

Selon des sources palestiniennes, Yasser Arafat a d'autant plus facilement accepté la décision de l'UE qu'il n'appréciait qu'à moitié ces visites, en raison des relations difficiles qu'il entretenait avec le chef de la Maison d'Orient.

Retard mental : premier handicap en Jordanie

Malgré l'absence de statistiques précises sur les différents handicaps, plusieurs spécialistes affirment que le retard mental est le plus répandu, en raison notamment des pratiques communautaires.

Une enquête d'Anca de Maio

Présent dans toutes les communautés, le handicap mental représente 33% de la population mondiale, selon des études des Nations Unies. Si les spécialistes ne peuvent nous donner un pourcentage aussi exact pour la Jordanie, ils semblent tous d'accord pour dire que le retard mental est le handicap le plus fréquent dans ce pays. Le Directeur du Centre d'éducation spécialisée Al-Razi à Irbid Lweibdeh, Ziad Sakjha, avance le chiffre approximatif de 90.000 personnes handicapées mentales.

Dans cette catégorie entre toute personne ayant une insuffisance mentale révélée avant l'âge de 18 ans. Les degrés de ce handicap vont des cas légers et modérés (très nombreux) aux cas (moins fréquents) de handicap sévère ou multiple.

L'Union générale des sociétés volontaires (UGSV) s'occupe de plus de la moitié des handicapés inscrits en institutions. Le directeur du département des études et de recherches de l'UGSV, Ghanem Bustami, estime que la cause majeure des déficiences mentales est d'origine génétique, malgré une forte distinction enregistrée ces vingt dernières années. «Environ 40-50% des cas de handicaps suivis dans les centres de Sid, Baqa, Laybdeh et Zarqa de l'Association de santé mentale ont des origines génétiques», souligne-t-il. On trouve chez certains couples consanguins quatre, cinq, jusqu'à dix enfants avec le même handicap.

Dans ces situations il n'y a pas de doute sur la nature génétique du handicap. Mais, poursuit-il, malgré le risque de nouveaux cas, les parents espèrent toujours que leur prochain bébé sera normal.

Patient comme un ergothérapeute

Mamoun Al-Khob est ergothérapeute. Drôle de métier pour ce jeune homme de 22 ans au regard vif. Après ses études terminées l'an dernier, Mamoun a commencé à travailler dans le centre spécialisé d'éducation et de rééducation Al-Razi à Irbid.

Amal inauguré à Ramtha en mars dernier. Dans sa salle de gym et des mini-échelles, Mamoun, malgré le nom barbare de sa profession, n'est pas un tortionnaire. Bien au contraire. Il s'occupe de la rééducation de jeunes enfants handicapés : massages et divers exercices physiques sont au programme. Au total, pendant toute la semaine, Mamoun a 90 enfants à sa charge.

«Au début pour le directeur et moi-même, il était vraiment difficile de persuader les familles d'amener leurs enfants au centre. Mais aujourd'hui nous avons réussi», dit-il dans un anglais parfait.

Malgré une enfance passée, surtout au Bahrein, Mamoun semble heureux d'avoir retrouvé son village natal, où il profite de la «vie naturelle» de province loin de l'agitation d'Amman pour 200 JD par mois. Néanmoins, le jeune homme souhaite

approfondir ses connaissances et continuer son cursus à l'étranger, en décrochant, pour quoi pas, une bourse de l'association américaine des ergothérapeutes. En attendant, il poursuit son expérience en travaillant le jeudi comme volontaire dans le centre de paralysie cérébrale d'Irbid.

Très consciencieusement Mamoun a choisi cette formation parce qu'elle lui donnait l'assurance d'un travail. «Toute la Jordanie a besoin de thérapeutes qualifiés», analyse-t-il avec désinvolture. Tout de même, son métier n'est pas des plus faciles. Il le qualifie de «très frustrant» mais ne semble pas découragé et il ajoute gaiement : «Il faut beaucoup de patience et de persévérance. Parfois on travaille des mois et des mois sans voir le moindre progrès. Pour une chose apparemment infinie, comme permettre à un enfant de tenir sa tête droite, il faut au moins trois ou quatre mois d'efforts».

Sur les bancs du centre surnommé «la Maison de l'Espoir», des mains avec des enfants sur les genoux attendent en silence le jeune ergothérapeute pour la séance du matin. Pour elles, nul doute que les progrès de leurs petits sont incalculables.

Au-delà des causes directes, qu'elles soient génétiques, médicales, éducatives ou nutritionnelles, les spécialistes, pour la plupart, stigmatisent les pratiques communautaires et les mentalités rétrogrades. Le mariage consanguin (entre cousins germains surtout), par exemple, répandu dans les sociétés arabes, peut être considéré comme responsable de handicaps mentaux ou de cas de surdités. De même, les maternités précoces (autour de 14-16 ans) ainsi que les grossesses tardives ne sont pas sans conséquences : mongolisme et autres anomalies génétiques.

Faut-il pour autant dénoncer le modèle traditionnel tribal de la société jordanienne comme le premier responsable des cas de handicaps mentaux ? Sans étude scientifique précise, ce pas ne peut être franchi. «Dans 25% des cas seulement, on arrive à identifier les causes», rappelle Ali Al-Shawabhin, le secrétaire général des Jeux Olympiques pour handicapés en Jordanie, qui refuse l'idée du mariage consanguin comme cause essentielle des handicaps mentaux dans les pays arabes. D'autres facteurs rentrent en

ligne de compte. Les erreurs médicales ou les négligences de la part du personnel des hôpitaux ne sont pas rares : intervention tardive dans le déroulement des accouchements difficiles, recours incorrect à des instruments dangereux (forceps, ventouse), dosage inadéquat de la concentration d'oxygène dans les couveuses des prématurés. Ce recensement que l'on retrouve dans la bouche de M. Al-Khatib à Ramtha et de M. Bustami à Amman n'est pas là pour nous rassurer.

Ensuite il y a le manque d'informations de nombreuses femmes sur la grossesse ou les notions élémentaires de puériculture. «On rencontre des cas où le handicap a été provoqué par des lésions cérébrales à la suite d'une très forte fièvre ou d'une maladie d'enfance mal soignée», explique M. Sakjha du centre Al-Razi.

Enfin, les parents sont parfois coupables de négligences : ce sont les accidents domestiques et ces enfants laissés sans surveillance, seuls, dans des endroits dangereux ou dans la rue.

A partir de là, «il faut promouvoir un travail de prévention et d'intervention rapide», conclut Ghanem Bustami, on a constaté que beaucoup de cas légers s'aggravent faute de dépistage et de suivi précoces. «De la même manière, les enfants atteints de surdités qui ne sont pas correctement assistés auront un retard mental», souligne Hayat Shekar, éducatrice spécialisée pour les sourds.

Handicap : une honte ? Le Ministère du développement social organise ainsi des conférences de diffusion et de vulgarisation pour rendre les gens, surtout les femmes, plus conscients des risques de handicaps.

En cas de handicap léger ou modéré, l'intervention précoce recommandée consiste à évaluer ce handicap, à éduquer et réhabiliter l'enfant le plus tôt possible, afin de lui permettre de mieux s'intégrer à l'école et dans la société. Facile à dire, pas facile à faire. Beaucoup de familles ne veulent pas coopérer avec les éducateurs des centres.

Les aides du ministère Aide financière du Ministère du développement social pour les familles ayant des enfants avec un handicap sévère ou multiple : 40 JD par enfant handicapé jusqu'à l'âge de 18 ans pour les familles avec un revenu inférieur à 125 JD par mois ; 30 JD pour les familles gagnant entre 125 et 200 JD par mois. Le Ministère offre également des facilités comme : l'exemption de taxes douanières pour les équipements techniques, les voitures spécialisées ; l'exemption des taxes pour obtenir une licence d'emploi (pour maison d'urgence) ; une réduction de prix pour le transport urbain ; une assistance médicale gratuite pour tous les types de handicaps.

Handicapés : les chiffres en question

Combien de handicapés (mentaux, physiques...) en Jordanie ? Question sans réponse précise pour le moment. Deux choses sont sûres cependant. Tout d'abord le chiffre de 46.940 avancé par le Département des statistiques est ridiculement bas sachant qu'il y a plus de 10.000 enfants handicapés dans les différentes institutions du royaume et qu'au moins 100.000 autres sont sur des listes d'attente. C'est en tout cas le calcul de Ghanem Bustami, directeur du département de recherches de l'Union générale des sociétés volontaires (UGSV). Ensuite, l'estimation sensationnelle de 400.000 apparue ici et là dans la presse n'est qu'une projection d'une norme internationale : des études mondiales montrent qu'en général toute population d'un pays compte 10% d'handicapés, d'où ce chiffre de 400.000 en Jordanie. L'approximation la plus prudente place le nombre des

handicapés en Jordanie entre 200 et 400.000. En fait, plusieurs obstacles s'opposent au recensement correct de cette population. D'abord il est difficile de diagnostiquer un handicap avant l'âge de deux ans. Ensuite la révélation des handicaps légers n'intervient souvent qu'après trois ou quatre années de scolarité normale. Enfin beaucoup de familles ressentent de la honte à l'égard de leur enfant handicapé et refusent de le déclarer comme tel. En comptabilisant tous ces cas cachés, Ghanem Al Bustami parvient à un total minimum de 200.000 handicapés en Jordanie, un chiffre que d'autres spécialistes ne reculent pas.

L'organisation d'un recensement national de la population handicapée et la distribution de «cartes d'identité» aux personnes handicapées sont encore à l'état de projets. Ce n'est pourtant qu'à partir de statistiques plus précises, que les autorités pourront établir un plan national adéquat pour l'éducation et l'intégration sociale des handicapés.

Nouvelles du Pays

Partenariat euro-méditerranéen

Un accord pour s'ouvrir les portes de l'Europe

Après le Maroc, la Tunisie, l'Autorité palestinienne et Israël, la Jordanie est devenue cette semaine le cinquième partenaire méditerranéen de l'Union européenne (UE). L'accord sera ratifié dans un an. Le royaume hachémite en attend des retombées autant économiques que politiques.

C'est fait. Lundi dernier, l'accord sur le partenariat euro-jordanien a été signé à Bruxelles, en présence du Prince Hassan. Un accord qualifié d'historique puisque pour la première fois, la Jordanie signe un accord avec un bloc économique mondial en dehors de la communauté des Etats arabes.

Les responsables jordaniens du secteur public ont déclaré qu'ils étaient satisfaits : «C'est un contrat stratégique», affirmait le ministre jordanien des Affaires étrangères, pendant que Rima Khalaf, le ministre du Plan mettait l'accent sur les chances pour l'économie jordanienne d'augmenter la production et les emplois. De son côté, Hamdi Tabbara, le président de l'association des hommes d'affaires jordaniens, soulignait que l'accord était un pas courageux pour renforcer les relations commerciales entre les deux partenaires.

Composé de 200 pages, l'accord vient enfin d'être conclu deux ans après la conférence de Barcelone en novembre 1993, deux ans de négociations parfois difficiles. On se souvient que cet état Espagnol et Jordaniens s'étaient opposés sur la question des quotas d'importation du concentré de tomate.

Le traité prévoit le développement de la coopération économique et d'importantes baisses des tarifs douaniers. Ainsi les marchandises jordaniennes seront exonérées des

taxes douanières dès l'entrée en vigueur de l'accord (dans un an, après ratification des Parlements jordanien et européen). De leur côté, les exportations de l'Union européenne seront graduellement libérées de taxes sur 12 ans. A l'horizon 2010, l'accord devrait conduire à la création d'une zone franche. On compte donc en Jordanie sur un accroissement de l'investissement européen direct pour créer de nouveaux emplois et augmenter la production locale. De même, l'arrivée de la technologie européenne sur le marché jordanien pourrait renforcer les capacités productives des entreprises et les rendre plus compétitives face à la concurrence internationale.

339 millions d'euros Ramon Mestres, le conseiller économique de l'ambassade européenne à Amman a toutefois évoqué un soutien financier supplémentaire de 339 millions d'euros accordé par l'UE à la Jordanie. Il est évident qu'une bonne partie de cette aide est destinée à surmonter les impacts négatifs issus de l'application de certains articles de l'accord. «Notre industrie sera directement en compétition avec les autres produits internationaux», craignent notamment un bon nombre de patrons jordaniens. De plus, le déficit de la balance commerciale entre les deux partenaires risque encore de s'aggraver (accroissement du rapport est de une exportation jordanienne pour dix exportations de l'Union européenne). Mais les Européens semblent convaincus du succès de cette alliance : «L'industrie jordanienne est d'ores et déjà appelée à s'ouvrir davantage sur l'économie mondiale et à améliorer la qualité de ses produits».

Enfin l'accord d'association ne se limite pas au seul volet économique et commercial, quoique fondamental : la coopération politique en est aussi un objectif primordial. La paix, la stabilité régionale, le développement des droits de l'homme et la démocratie sont autant de belles perspectives politiques et culturelles pour



Le Prince Hassan a beaucoup insisté sur «la dimension humaine» de l'accord d'association signé lundi dernier entre la Jordanie et l'Union européenne. Au centre, le ministre des Affaires étrangères du Luxembourg, qui occupe actuellement la présidence de l'Union et à droite, le président de la Commission européenne, Jacques Santer.

une réalisation complète de ce partenariat jordanien-européen méditerranéen. Immédiatement après la signature de l'accord, le Prince Hassan a insisté sur cette «dimension humaine» chère à son cœur. Il ne faudrait pas l'oublier trop vite.

Suleiman Sweiss

C'est la vie

L'agenda culturel d'Amman

Conférence

L'Orient des cités romaines. Catherine Courtois, Docteur en archéologie de l'université de Louvain-la-Neuve en Belgique et spécialiste des théâtres romains, nous emmène à la découverte des plus belles cités de l'Orient romainisé (Jérash, Palmyre, Bosra etc...). Samedi 29 novembre à 18h30 au Centre culturel Français. Renseignements au 637009/636445.

Exposition

Où l'on redécouvre le parcours artistique d'Ammar Khammash, le designer qui habille les intérieurs privés et publics jordaniens. Jusqu'au 12 décembre au CCF.

Cinéma

Fin de la XII^e semaine du film italien à l'auditorium Samir Rifai de l'Université de Jordanie. *Piccoli orrori*, de Tonino De Bernardi, samedi 29 novembre à 17h00. *Traffitti da un raggio di sole*, de Claudio Del Punta, samedi 29 à 20h00 et dimanche 30 novembre à 17h00. Les films sont sous-titrés en anglais. Prix d'entrée : 1 JD pour les adultes et 500 fils pour les étudiants.

Le Voyage nocturne du Prophète Muhammad

Ce jeudi est un jour fort en Jordanie. Les musulmans célèbrent le Voyage nocturne (al-Miraj) et l'Ascension (al-Istisra) du Prophète Muhammad.

Une nuit où il dormait dans le sanctuaire près de la Ka'bah, l'ange Gabriel le réveille et le conduit jusqu'à un animal appelé Buraq, plus petit qu'une mule mais plus rapide qu'un daim et ailé. Monté sur Buraq, avec Gabriel à ses côtés, le Prophète fut transporté à Jérusalem où, avec les prophètes Abraham, Moïse, Jésus et d'autres, il prit place dans l'emplacement du temple de Salomon.

Deux récipients furent alors offerts au Prophète : l'un contenant du vin, l'autre du lait. Le Prophète choisit le lait et Gabriel déclara alors qu'il avait été la voie primordiale pour lui-même et pour son peuple. Porté par Gabriel, Muhammad s'éleva jusqu'aux régions célestes à partir du rocher du mont du Temple, sans doute à partir du site du Saint des Saints de ce Temple, que le Coran appelle «la Mosquée la plus éloignée» (al-Masjid al-Aqsa). Le saint maître du Dôme du Rocher s'éleva au-dessus de la voûte céleste, puis, après de là, la mosquée al-Aqsa qui a pris le nom que le Coran donne au mont du Temple, le mont al-Nabi.

Le Prophète accéda à la Présence divine en passant par sept ciels, qui symbolisent les degrés séparant la non-manifestation de la manifestation. Alors qu'il accomplissait ses parcours, l'ange Gabriel se transforma en une forme céleste et spirituelle comme l'avaient fait les prophètes avec lesquels il avait prié et qu'il rencontrait maintenant de nouveau dans son ascension en tant que réalités spirituelles, chacun placé dans sa sphère céleste. Arrivé au stade culminant, Dieu ordonna au Prophète qu'il fit en sorte que les hommes accomplissent la prière cinquante fois par jour ; quand le Prophète descendit, Moïse lui suggéra de retourner vers Dieu pour lui demander que ce nombre soit réduit à une de plus que ce que peut la capacité humaine. Leur nombre fut finalement réduit à cinq.

Ce voyage de La Mecque à Jérusalem est appelé l'Isra' et l'Ascension de Jérusalem aux régions célestes, le Miraj. Ensemble, ils sont connus sous le nom de Voyage nocturne, qui a fourni un sujet fréquent aux livres de miniatures persanes.

By Roger C.

ROLLING STONE celebrates its anniversary which comes anniversary issue that was magazine's "Now, just Rolling Stone Women in R... It became music story n... artists." Janu... note. Then h... writing was h... magazine ab... a more to... Some's histor... comes no... but in the ac... sponsored bo... Stone cov... 272-page har... printed in the... he displayed... Rolling Stone... Roll Hall of F...

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Rolling Stone presents an out-of-tune history of rock 'n' roll women

By Roger Catlin

ROLLING STONE threw itself a party to celebrate its "Women in Rock" book, which comes out on the heels of its 30th anniversary "Women in Rock" special issue that was on the stands alongside Spin magazine's "The Girl Issue."

Now, just about the only thing as old as Rolling Stone magazine is the idea of "Women in Rock."

"It became obvious to us that the major music story of 1997 was the rise of women artists," Jann Wenner says in an editor's note. Then he congratulates himself on writing way back in the second issue of the magazine about Tina Turner, whom he referred to as "an incredible chick."

A more telling example of Rolling Stone's history in dealing with women in rock comes not in the 192-page issue itself, but in the accompanying 32-page, AT&T-sponsored booklet surveying all 773 Rolling Stone covers in the last 30 years. (A 272-page hardback of such covers will be printed in the spring. Past covers also will be displayed in a 20-city tour with other Rolling Stone artifacts from the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.)

And what does the history of cover photos show?

Well, once the counterculture magazine had a cover-photo format, in 1968, the first woman to appear on the cover was Yoko Ono, naked, alongside her husband, John Lennon, in the famous "Two Virgins" album shot.

The next woman to appear on the cover wasn't until 1969, adorning the special Groupies issue that saluted the era's most popular use of women in rock.

Only after that did Janis Joplin get on the cover. The only other women musicians on the cover in the '60s? Joni Mitchell and Tina Turner.

Overall, women made just 169 of the 773 covers through the years, and only 102 of them had anything to do with music—and we're throwing in Ono, Linda McCartney and D'Arcy in the Smashing Pumpkins for good measure. The rest were TV or movie starlets, supermodels or window dressing. One 1974 cover illustration of a bikini girl on a rocket was there to illustrate a Steely Dan story.

It's one thing to salute the female contribution to pop music. But to pretend it has anything at all to do with the history of this

rock mag is disingenuous at best.

Indeed, when the Go-Go's became the first all-female rock band to top the charts, they got their cover in 1982, but little respect; for the shot, they had to flounce around in underwear.

True, Bonnie Raitt was recognized with a cover in 1975 before her comeback in 1990, but most of the '70s covers seemed to belong to Linda Ronstadt, who first appeared in 1975 with her tongue slightly out. She returned in 1976 with a strap of her slip hanging down and the following year with a lot of rouge, being embraced by Peter Asher. The peak came in 1978, when Ronstadt was dressed in silk dress and twirling her hair, followed just three issues later with her in a sexy, leopard print, off the shoulder number, with Steve Martin. Her last cover came in 1980, more mature but still pictured with lips apart, ready for a kiss.

Rolling Stone had a new reliable cover girl in the '80s. After a slow start (Cyndi Lauper, in her only cover shot, beat her by half a year), Madonna made it to the cover virtually every year of the decade after her debut in 1984. She wasn't on the cover in 1988, so she was on in 1989 twice, followed by shots in 1991 and the current cover.

Courtney Love may be the chosen one for the '90s, although she, too, started late—in mourning and deep cleavage in 1994; the current cover is her third.

For all the fuss, one of every three women on the cover was an actress (and usually, a pretty dishy one), not a musician.

Alicia Silverstone had to kneel to pink panties for a 1995 cover; a close-up of Drew Barrymore that year had her licking her lips (curiously, none of the male cover stars that year were asked to pose similarly).

Laura Dern got a cover without a top on in 1993, turned away from the camera; Janet Jackson's famous 1993 shot had her topless and facing forward, with a pair of male hands reaching around to cover her breasts.

John Lennon, David Cassidy and an unidentified Woodstock reveler



John Lennon and Yoko Ono

are the only men to be shot naked on earlier Rolling Stone covers. In recent years, the hands Blind Melon and Red Hot Chili Peppers took it all off for a cover.

Still, nudity seems far more standard for women cover subjects.

Debi Moore went naked for a 1995 cover; Bette Midler stripped down a year later. Lisa Bonet went without pants for a 1988 issue; TV's Jennifer Aniston showed her bare bottom on the cover last year.

Among all this seductive posing, there have been a number of women in pop never honored with a cover on Rolling Stone: Aretha Franklin, Marianne Faithfull, Nicki Carr, Joan Jett, Selena, Laurie Anderson, Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth, Mariah Carey, Polly Jean Harvey, Bjork, Ani DiFranco, Queen Latifah, Luscious Jackson, Chaka Khan, Shania Twain, Sarah McLachlan, Tori Amos, Fiona Apple...

Even so, there has been room to salute top supermodels. Cindy Crawford, topless and holding her own to close the '93 year; Claudia Schiffer pouring out of a low-cut dress in a 1990 cover shot; even Christie Brinkley showing off her had in a weird 1983 cover story about health clubs that

probably won't be shown at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Although Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, George McGovern, Martin Luther King and even Richard Nixon have been pictured on the cover of Rolling Stone through the years, which female world leaders have been chosen for such attention? Well, there have been none in the last 20 years, and in the entire history, there was Tricia Nixon in 1971; and two in 1977, Princess Caroline and Bella Abzug.

Three incredible chicks. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Claudia Schiffer



Cindy Crawford

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THE STAR'S

WORK

Edited by Zeid Nasser

A web site is a must, but what does it cost in Jordan?

Views on web-pricing

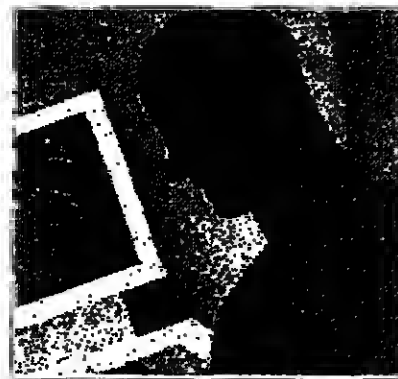
By Jabra Ghneim

Special to The Star
RECENT EXPERIENCES in the Jordanian market show that most Jordanian businesses are hesitant when it comes to building web sites and establishing a presence on the Internet. In spite of that many Jordanian businessmen and managers are becoming more conscious; they have e-mail, and they don't hesitate to put it on their business cards and in their marketing literature. Many know what Java, ActiveX, and CGI are and they even have ideas on what they want in a web site. Still, there is great hesitancy when it comes to establishing a web presence. In an attempt to address these concerns, we need to "room" a sample of the minds of business managers regarding these matters.

Pricing

This is the biggest barrier in the Jordanian market. Prices in Jordan are exaggerated. The average price of a web page is JD 300 to JD 500. This is not reasonable in a market like Jordan or even anywhere else in the Middle East. It certainly can't be justified by high production costs; especially in a market where the average wage of a web developer for example is 10-15 percent of the wages in the US or Europe. And where other production costs are in the same neighborhood: You can

get about 25 MB of space on a server in the US for less than \$500 in the first year. Thus, businessmen worry when it comes to budgeting issues. They are aware of the prices



in the US and Europe and wonder when marketers from local web development companies approach them with reasonable prices! This is a real concern especially that most of what these businesses want is a "brochure" web site, which is usually their test site through which they gauge the benefits of their web presence and estimate the number of hits that such a site would attract.

For this reason, they are always worried and suspicious when it comes to pricing. Most "web development" companies in Jordan do not offer reasonable prices that meet the demands of such customers.

What's in it for me?

A web site is a window to the world. In a country like Jordan which depends heavily on tourism and contact with the outside world a web site can introduce your business to the world. Most web sites should have, even in the introductory stages, a method to collect information about visitors. It could later be used for the benefit of the company. Many Arab web sites I visited fail to provide such means. Having an e-mail link isn't interactive enough to satisfy that purpose. I am happy to say that most businesses in Jordan are aware of such needs. Web site visitors are always hunting for value added content. A web site should strive to give visitors more than a "brochure" about the company and its activities. Value added content could be for example a database of business information, a mini electronic magazine (e-zine) or chat rooms to discuss product-related issues.

Web site visitors love to be rewarded for their visits. A professional content development agency should be able to develop such material through consultations with their client.

What does it really cost to build a web site?

To answer this question we need to take a look at a certain approach to Web development,

How to deal with Information Overload on the Internet? The intelligent agent concept

By Dr Mohammed Omar

Special to The Star
MOST OF the suppliers, developers, and users of information technology agree that in this information age, technology is changing at unprecedented rate. This change is compounding the difficulty of making the proper selection of the information that is best suited to user's needs and requirements, especially with the huge volume of information available on the Internet.

The growth in unstructured information from sources like: Intranets and the Internet, faxes, and e-mail has caused many problems, like difficulty to use information, information overload and the need for users' active participation.

In a survey by Reuters Business Information, in 1996, it was found that one third of managers suffer ill-health as a direct consequence of stress associated with information overload. Of the surveyed managers, 48 percent predict that the Internet will play a primary role in aggravating the problem, while 43 percent think that important decisions are delayed as a result of having too much information.

Almost 80 percent cite the rapid increase of internal communications within companies as a key reason for the increase in information overload. There are two main approaches sifting through information.

The first method puts the responsibility in the hands of the user who searches for what he/she needs. As part of this

approach, the user PULLS the information using Search Engines which search by index, key words, and by subject. Problems associated with this



method include the difficulties associated with finding if the world is actually there, getting too many hits, separating the wheat from the chaff, difficulty of use. Also, there are matters of lack of autonomy between the retrieved responses and the problems are getting worse. The increased frustration led in the second method, where the responsibility of providing the information is shifted to special software systems on the Internet. This method PUSHES the information to the user based on predefined criteria about the information. This approach was put to use in 1995. It became clear that Push is something that is delivered in the user's face, like junk mail and that information

overload is not a function of the volume of information out there; it actually represents a gap between the volume of information and the tools we have in order to assimilate that information into useful knowledge. The cost to the user is that it takes time to sort through the information, and time is money. But, if the push approach is augmented with intelligent agents, it can be more subtle. These products are applying intelligence to the push concept. They are the next level of sophistication. Intelligent Push Technology is one element that helps ensure that people stay informed. Agent technology should underpin a serious push-based solution and allow both the sender and recipient to intelligently filter and select relevant information. This led to providing personalized information automatically, based on the changing preferences of the user as a result of a two-way dialogue.

The intelligent agent concept developed from research at Cambridge University on the adaptive Probabilistic Concept Modeling (APCM) which was based on Bayesian Probabilities of the 1960s. This is a fundamental framework for evidence and chance. It is also based on Shannon's Information Theorems of the 1940s state that there is a relation of probability and information. Also, the concepts of Neural Networks which appeared in the late 1980s contribute to this development.

Agents gain intelligence in one or more ways of learning that include being told overtly like "Find articles describing the achievements of Arabs in the field of mathematics"; or by example directing the agent to a specific web site to read and learn from. www, website address.com; or by watching covertly through reading along with the user while accessing the Internet, thus forming a profile for the user and understanding his interests and tastes, bringing back information relevant to such interests.

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INTERFACE

BY ZEID NASSER

The move away from shrink-wrapped software

THERE IS a very obvious trend among our local software developers, by which they seem to be changing focus.

All the leading companies, who have been prominent in the fields of off-the-shelf business software, are moving out of this field and into customized, big systems.

It seems that, after several years of developing and marketing their shrink-wrapped applications, the returns were relatively lower than they expected. Accordingly, and contrary to what we had predicted in the past, shrink-wrapped software exports from Jordan were somewhat low.

However, something else is being exported and it is enjoying marked growth: tailor-made, large business software solutions, based in part on the applications and "engines" which our developers had produced in the past.

Naturally, the highly modular systems produced look very little like the original software they emerged from. In most cases, the developer tries to retain some similarity to a previous brand, simply for sentimental reasons, but everyone knows that this software system is nothing like its small, desktop counterpart. Already, Jordanian software customizers are acquiring large contracts all over the region to supply management, finance and general business systems.

On another note, they are exporting their expertise to other software developers, worldwide, by taking on the development of parts of their software. Our software specialists are quite skilled in "coding" other people's software, as it seems.

The country's top software development companies are busier than ever, but they're not striving to develop brands or to popularize desktop PC products.

Instead, they are making themselves a name as large "software contractors" who can compete with the best on the regional level, and sometimes on an international level. Particular companies are enjoying massive growth in their teams and facilities, and are being "hailed" by large companies like Microsoft and Oracle as "partner developers" in the region.

So, after all, it seems that our developers are going in the right direction and they are playing their role in increasing Jordan's status and contribution to the software business in the Middle East.

Perhaps it's not exactly what we expected, but in the quest to deliver to the market what it really wants, our developers found their way. ■

News Update

Ten Million

Subscribers at AOL
● America Online announced that it has more than 10 million subscribers around the world. AOL says it has gained three million subscribers over the past year in North America, Europe and Japan.

Founded in 1985, AOL reached the 1 million subscriber mark in 1994 and 5 million subscribers last year.

Apple announces new Power PC

● Apple Computer introduced the next-generation family of Power Macs called the Power Macintosh G3, based on the fastest available PowerPC processors, these will be the first

developed using a "build-to-order" manufacturing strategy, which other PC makers have adopted in the past year.

Apple also said it will begin to sell Macs, software, printers and other accessories directly to customers, via the Internet or by telephone.

Microsoft Releases New Version of Windows

● Microsoft has unveiled its latest version of an operating system for handheld computers, Windows CE.

Microsoft now has 10 manufacturers licensed to build handheld computers using Windows CE, including eight companies that are already shipping the devices to stores.

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FIFA president wants friendly between Palestine and Israel

TOKYO—FIFA is trying to set up a friendly match between Palestine and Israel in New York. FIFA president Joe Havelange said last Monday.

Havelange, said at a news conference he is holding talks with Palestinian President Yasser Arafat about organizing the game.

"If we succeed we will once more show the world that through football we can reach solutions that neither the politicians, businessmen or diplomats can achieve," he said.

Havelange, flanked at the news conference by UEFA President Lennart Johansson, is on a fact-finding mission ahead of the 2002 World Cup to be co-hosted by Japan and South Korea.

The FIFA President said he hoped Jordan would join South Korea in form a com-

bined team for the 2002 World Cup and that if FIFA's suggestion was accepted he would travel to the North Korean capital of Pyongyang as soon as possible.

He said he also would like North Korea to share some of the role as a co-host with South Korea.

Havelange has plans for a trip to North Korea with FIFA vice-presidents in the first half of next year.

The FIFA president recalled that a combined Korean team played in the 1991 World Youth Championships in Portugal.

"If we could reach the same entente as we did in 1991 it would be valuable and important for the relationship between the two countries," said Havelange.

Havelange added that he would write to the President of the North Korean Football Fed-

eration to tell him of FIFA's wishes. He will also suggest that North Korea should host at least one of the group matches if the border with South Korea is opened.

A World Cup match could take place at the 100,000 capacity Pyongyang stadium if the Koreans sign a peace accord, he said.

The first peace talks since 1954 are due to start in Geneva on 9 December between the two Koreas, the United States and China. North and South Korea have been technically at war since the 1950-53 Korean war ended in an armistice.

Korean Football Association President Dr Chung Mong Joon has pushed for North Korea to take part in the 2002 World Cup since FIFA decided last year that Japan and South Korea could share the tournament, the first time it has been co-hosted.

Havelange had arrived in Tokyo from Seoul where he promised to invite North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and



Havelange

the next South Korean president to the World Cup opening ceremony in France.

In Tokyo, the FIFA delegation declared themselves impressed after inspecting the 70,000-seater Yokohama International Stadium which lies to the south-west of Tokyo. The venue, which is nearing completion, could host the 2002 World Cup Final. ■

NBA suspends Oakley for one game

By Barbara Barker

NEW YORK—The New York Knicks can debate whether Charles Oakley slapped, punched or pushed Otis Thorpe until they are black-and-blue in the face, but the NBA has decided that his attack Sunday night was enough to merit a one-game suspension.

After reviewing tapes of the altercation in the fourth quarter of the Knicks' 104-84 win over the Vancouver Grizzlies, NBA enforcer Rod Thorn suspended Oakley for Friday's game at Detroit and fined him \$7,500. On top of that, Oakley will be docked 1/82nd of his annual \$2.88 million salary, which comes to \$35,122.

Thorpe was fined \$3,500 for throwing an elbow but received no suspension.

"If you hit someone in the face with the heel of your hand or a fist or a slap, you're going to get suspended," said Thorn, the NBA's senior vice president of basketball operations. (Oakley) definitely hit him.

He initiated the altercation with the flagrant foul. Otis Thorpe retaliated with the elbow to his chest, and then Oakley hit him in the face."

Oakley's suspension means the Knicks could be without two of their starters Friday in Detroit. Seconds after the Oakley-Thorpe confrontation, Larry Johnson suffered a sprained right ankle. Though the Knicks have a rare four-day break before their next game, general manager Ernie Grunfeld said it is "a bad sprain" and that Johnson will be evaluated later this week.

"What Charles did is he reacted to an elbow," Grunfeld said Monday. "It doesn't matter, though. It's out of our hands, really. We've been dealt these cards and we have to play with this deck. This will give Buck Williams an opportunity to pick up the slack. We just have to move forward."

Coach Jeff Van Gundy hasn't said who will start in place of Oakley and Johnson. If necessary, it's likely, however, that Williams and backup small forward Chris



Mills will see a lot of floor time.

Oakley, who could not be reached for comment Monday, said after the game he was simply defending himself. Van Gundy echoed that, adding that Oakley did not deserve to be suspended because he hit Thorpe with an

open hand rather than a fist.

The league, however, did not make such a distinction and seemingly was unimpressed with Van Gundy's argument that Oakley is resented by some players "because he plays hard."

Playing hard has meant that a league-mandated suspension has become almost an annual event for Oakley, who now has been suspended for four games in three seasons. Oakley was suspended for the first two games of last season after getting into a preseason fight with Charles Barkley. He also was forced to sit out the first game of the 1995-96 season after a preseason altercation with Scott Williams of the Philadelphia 76ers.

This season is the 27th in which technical fouls have been recorded. Heading into this season, Oakley ranked 10th among players on the all-time list with a career total of 124. Barkley was far and away the leader with 310.

Most of Oakley's teammates defended his action, but point guard Charlie Ward anticipated Sunday that there would be some kind of punishment.

Said Ward: "Everyone is different in how they feel with getting hit. He chose to throw punches, so he had to live with the consequences. ... Whether it's a slap or a punch, he did it. Like with anything else, let this be a lesson for everyone." ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

World cup qualifying Australia looks for way to stop Iran's Bagheri

MELBOURNE. Australia—Terry Venables is working on a plan to stop Iran's danger man Karim Bagheri dictating play in Saturday's crucial World Cup playoff against Australia here.

Bagheri returns to the Iranian team after completing a two-match suspension for being sent off in the 2-0 defeat by Qatar on 7 November.

Bagheri, who plays for Arminia Bielefeld in the German Bundesliga, missed last Saturday's first leg 1-1 draw in Tehran, but the Iranians are holding high hopes that he will swing the balance before an anticipated 90,000 crowd at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"We will be tightening up and making sure that he is not the influence that he can be," Venables said after Tuesday's

training here in sweltering conditions.

"He's a playmaker and he dictates the game and the pace of the game, his passing is excellent short and long," he said.

"He's a very good player and anything up to 30 yards he hits like a rocket."

The former England manager who became coach to the Soccerros in January, admitted that several of his players had been lacking in fitness in Tehran.

But he believes that demanding game made his players more match-hardened.

He said his players would not stray from their game plan and would attack but could be forced onto the back foot as the Iranians chased goals.

"It may be that we are

defending but we're not going to go out and do that," he said.

Australia needs either a victory or at worst a scoreless draw to ensure a place in next year's finals in France.

"It's like last Saturday, we did not decide to defend in the second half, they threw everything at us and we had to see it out," he said.

Soccer Australia reported that ticket sales were expected to reach 60,000 early Wednesday to the 95,000-capacity MCG.

Meanwhile, respected Hungarian referee Sandor Puhl will take charge of Saturday's match.

Puhl, who refereed the 1994 Brazil-Italy World Cup final, has been voted the No.1 referee for the past three years in an international poll. ■

France to remove fences at most World Cup venues

PARIS—France, in line with the wishes of FIFA—world soccer's governing body, will have no perimeter fencing at most of the stadiums for the 1998 World Cup finals.

"We're heading for eight out of 10 stadiums which will not have fencing, maybe nine out of 10," Michel Platini, job chief of the CFP World Cup organizing committee, said on Tuesday.

Platini was confirming what Sports Minister Marie-George Buffet said at a press conference, held by Prime Minister Lionel Jospin.

"We do not want to sort out the problem in a global way, but rather study it case by case," she said.

She said the city of Nantes was against doing away with fencing at their La Beaujoire stadium, while St Etienne was having financial difficulties.

Buffet said the government was looking for solutions "to avoid perturbing the view of the spectators."

At Lyon, Montpellier and Lens, they were seeking a hybrid solution to prevent pitch invasions.

She did not give a date for the final

of the perimeter fencing at the venues, which also include Marseille, Lille, Bordeaux and the new Stade de France and Parc des Princes in Paris.

The impetuous, somewhat modern Stade de France in the suburbs of St Denis is under completion while the rest of the grounds are at various stages of the building.

Marseille's Velodrome is set to have a new roof, three aluminium pitch-side canopies there, until later in the year.

Platini also kept to the fence-free message, saying: "Great progress has been made."

At Nantes 100 m, at St Etienne, the second division club is in some difficulty. The rest are all for the fence-free solution.

"They're going to be the stadiums that they had the financial resources," said Platini.

FIFA have for a long time been against perimeter fencing, saying people are not animals to be kept in cages.

It also believed fencing is dangerous in the case of a crowd stampede.

Stadium in Gujan-Mestrie last year in

which 76 people died.

First tragedy was reminiscent of the 1989 Hillsborough disaster in Sheffield, England, where 96 fans were crushed to death.

Legion reported on the security measures that will be in place at the venues, taking as their chief example England's treatment of the 1996 European championship finals.

There will be systems of video surveillance in the grounds managed by stewards. The police will be in charge outside.

Jospin opened the news conference by pledging the government's commitment to making the tournament a success more than just a sporting event.

He said an unprecedented, for a total cost of 6.67 billion francs (\$1.33 billion), security schedule and last from now, the government would begin a campaign to try to involve the whole country in the event.

Platini said a security force of 100,000 would be deployed to the stadiums, with 40,000 more in the 2000-01 season.

He said the security force would be

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